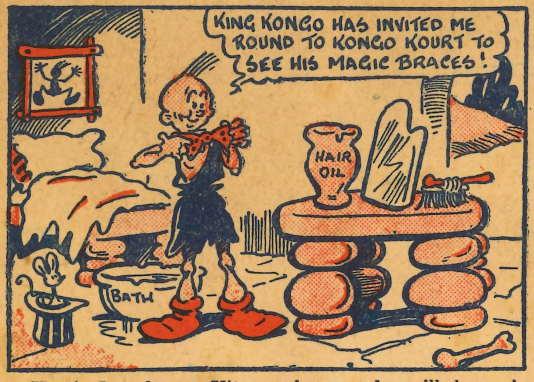
KNOCK-OUT FUN BOOK

1941

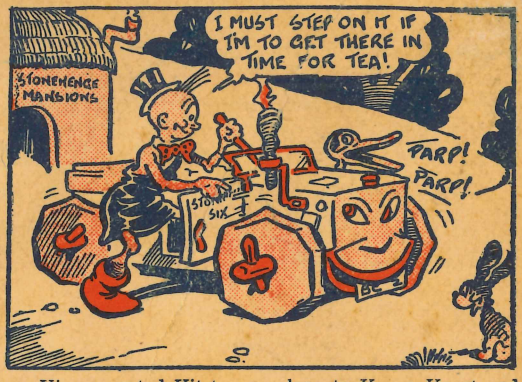
A.R.P. PRACTICE AT PERKY'S

PERKY PARKER'S POLICE STATION
SANDBAG FOR CHIEF COP
IF THAT HAD BEEN A BOMB YOU'D HAVE GOT HURT LAD!
CAMIFLARGE
NO BOMBING ALLOWED DURING LUNCH HOUR
MILK
PINT PLEASE
CAN I PLAY AT AIR RAIDS TOO? I'LL BE A HAIRYPLANE
SAND BAG
SAND BAG
DO NOT KNOCK NAILS IN THESE BLOONS
FOR 1 PERSON
OO! I DO SUFFER
AIR RAID SHELTERS
LOOKOUT POST
BARRAGE BALLOON
FOR ENEMY PARACHUTE JUMPERS
SEARCHLITE 3½ CANGLE POWER
OUTBOARDED - NO BATTERY
I THINK THIS GUN WOULD BE BETTER CATCHING SUBMARINES!
FOR SWEEPING UP REMAINS
OW!
BANG!
THUD
TOLEG.A.P. FOR HIRE FROM MUSEUM. £1 4½ PER BANG
THERE'S SOMETHING ON YOUR HEAD, SERG!
WET WATER IN CASE OF FIRE
SHELTER FOR MAGGOTS AND MOUSES
CHEEP
THE MODERN CHICKEN
NOO LAID

STONEHENGE KIT — THE ANCIENT BRIT.



1. Here's Stonehenge Kit, our hero, and you'll hear o' him a lot. T'other Saturday arternoon, arter dinner, the postman popped a paving-stone through his letter-box. It was a postcard from his pal King Kongo.



2. Kingy wanted Kit to pop along to Kongo Kourt and have a peep at his magic braces. Kit spring-cleaned himself in two seconds. Then he put on his suit of best Schnozzle-wiper skin, and topped the lot with a topper.

WHY, THERE'S KING KONGO'S LAUNDRY. IT MUST HAVE FALLEN FROM THE LAUNDRY VAN. I'LL TAKE IT ALONG!
STONEHENGE SIX
STONEHENGE LAUNDRY
KING KONGO'S SHIRTS

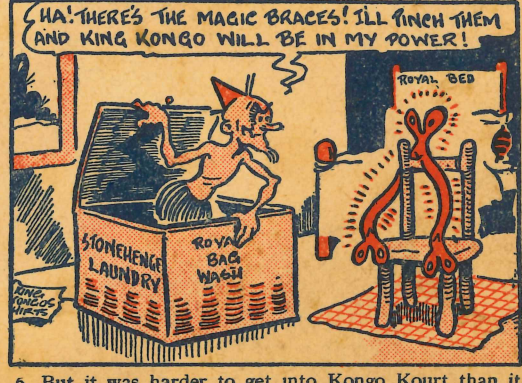
3. Kit's car was waiting without—without mudguards and a few other things. But all the same it was a rattling good car, and off Kit rattled to Kongo Kourt. But somebody had been and left their laundry lying about.

HE! HE! STONEHENGE KIT DOESN'T KNOW HE'S GIVING WHIZZY THE WIZARD A LIFT!
KING KONGO'S SHIRTS
STONEHENGE LAUNDRY
ROYAL BAG WASH
BC 2
FROM KONGO KOURT

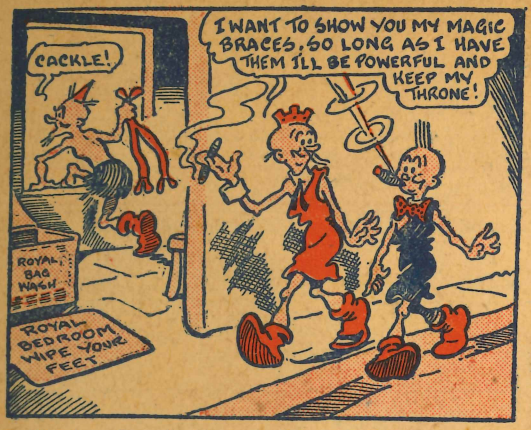
4. But Kit didn't pass by that basket on the by-pass. It was addressed to King Kongo, so our hero heaved it aboard the car. But it wasn't clean laundry inside—it was that dirty-trick merchant, Whizzy, the wicked wizard.

I FOUND YOUR LAUNDRY LYING IN THE ROAD, KINGY!
JUST POP THE BASKET IN MY BEDROOM, KIT!
STONEHENGE LAUNDRY
ROYAL BAG WASH
KING KONGO'S SHIRTS

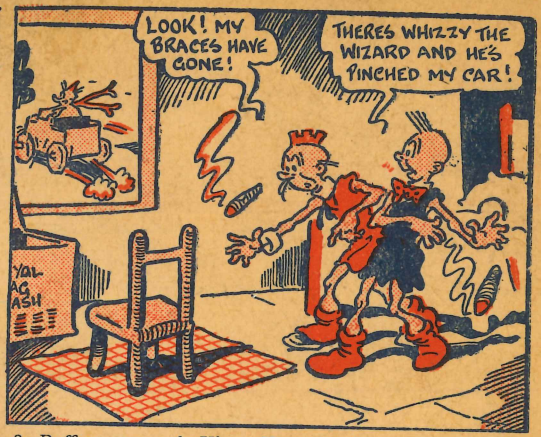
5. Whizzy had been looking for the winner of the Brontosossidge Handicap in the "Stonehenge Times" when he spotted the news about King Kongo's magic braces. And now Whizzy meant to bag them for himself!


HA! THERE'S THE MAGIC BRACES! I'LL PINCH THEM AND KING KONGO WILL BE IN MY POWER!
ROYAL BED
STONEHENGE LAUNDRY
ROYAL BAG WASH
KING KONGO'S SHIRTS

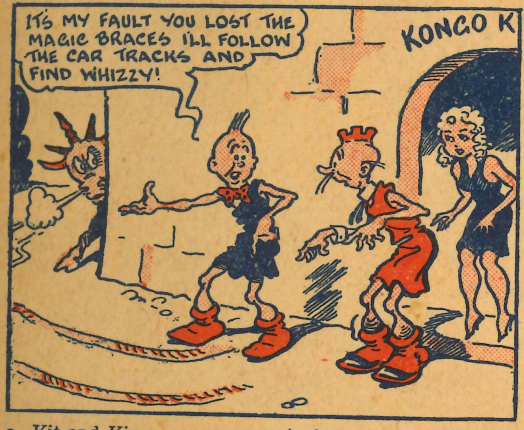
6. But it was harder to get into Kongo Kourt than it was to get into the bob seats at the pictures for four-pence. Then Whizzy had a wheeze and Kit helped him out. In fact, Kit carried Whizzy right into Kongo Kourt.


CACKLE!
I WANT TO SHOW YOU MY MAGIC BRACES, SO LONG AS I HAVE THEM I'LL BE POWERFUL AND KEEP MY THRONE!
ROYAL BAG WASH
ROYAL BEDROOM WIPE YOUR FEET

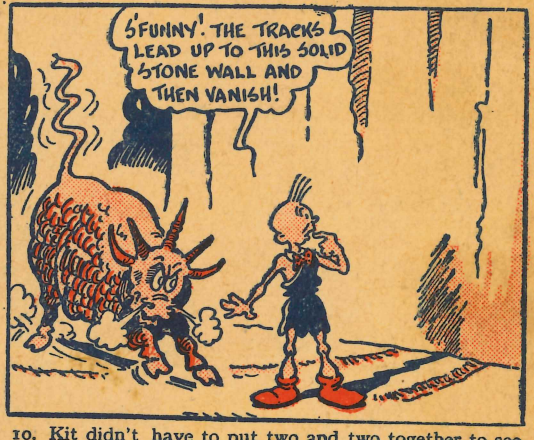
7. Not knowing what he was doing of, Kit bunged the laundry basket down in the room where the magic braces were, then tootled off and had a couple o' cups o' tea and stale buns with Kingy and Glam, their gal pal.



8. Puffing one of King Kongo's fourpenny Flor de Cabbagios, Kit felt "puff-ectly" happy as he hiked along to see the braces what all the fuss was about. But the magic braces had done a bunk—Whizzy had taken 'em.

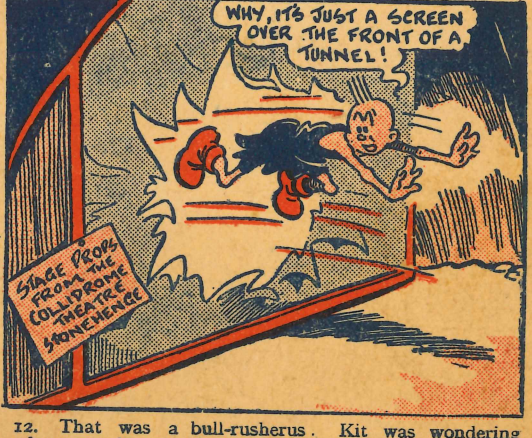


9. Kit and Kingy were so surprised that you could have knocked them down with a feather-bed. In a brace of shakes, Kit saw who'd bunked with the magic braces. There was old Whizzy whizzing off, and in Kit's car, too.



10. Kit didn't have to put two and two together to see that the wizard had put one over on him and King Kongo. Kit did a bit of detective work but summat went wrong with the works. The tracks ran through a wall!

11. Now that was real nasty of Whizzy. It was bad enough bunking with the magic braces, but running through a wall in the car wasn't fair. Kit would have to pull his socks up now. But what was that behind him?



12. That was a bull-rusherus. Kit was wondering what to do next when the bull-rusherus brought matters to a head. Woomph! Our hero was wafted away through the wall. You'll see where to on page 34!

BILLY BUNTER

THE FATTEST SCHOOLBOY ON EARTH

NOW, BOYS, YOU WILL BE PLEASED TO HEAR THAT I AM TAKING YOU WITH ME TO A FANCY DRESS PARTY AT POPPLETON COURT TO-NIGHT - SO COME ALONG AND GET READY!

1. Billy Bunter is the fattest schoolboy on earth. There is only one thing he likes better than a feed—two feeds! Billy didn't really mind going to school—except for the lessons he got there. He thought they were nothing more than an absolute waste of time. One day, however, he sat up and took notice.

2. Mr. Quelch, the master, was inviting all the boys to a party. Billy blinked happily. A party meant only one thing to him—GRUB and lots of it!

3. It was a fancy-dress party. Billy shuddered a bit at that. He hated dressing and washing himself. Perhaps it was all the grub he ate that made him such a grubby beast. Then he thought of the feed he'd get.

4. By a bit of luck Billy got a Musketeer's outfit. It was made for a man weighing about twenty stones, so it just fitted the fat lad nicely. But by the time Billy got dressed up Mr. Quelch and the others had gone off.

5. That made Billy get a move on. He didn't mind missing the others—they were a lot of mean beasts, anyway—but he didn't want to miss the feed. Bunter, however, wasn't used to mucking about in a Musketeer's togs.

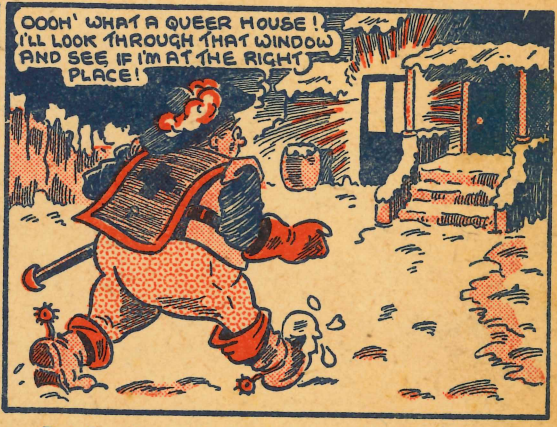
6. Somehow his sword got all tangled up with his legs. The slippery snow didn't help matters, either. Ooopsidaisy! Over went the fat lad and buried his schnozzle in the cold, cold snow at the foot of the steps.

7. Billy sat up and looked round. Of course, being the fattest schoolboy in the world, he couldn't help looking round. But what I mean is that he looked round to see where Mr. Quelch and the other boys had got to.

8. Not a soul was in sight. Billy tramped on until the soles of his feet were sore. Poppleton Court was the place he had to get to, and 'twas no good tramping through the snow without knowing where the place was.

POPPLETON COURT, DID YOU SAY? NO, ZUR THERE BE ONLY WOPPLETON MANOR - IT'S JUST ROUND THE CORNER!
THAT MUST BE THE PLACE - OLD QUELCHY MUST HAVE MADE A MISTAKE!

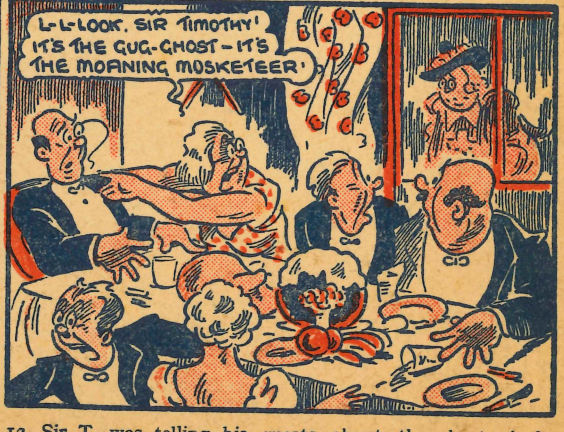
9. Coming along the road was old Charlie Chestnut. He'd been a farmer's boy for about fifty years now, and was hoping it would be a steady job. Billy stopped him and asked him the way to Poppleton Court.



10. But Charlie wasn't the local boy who made good. He was a local boy all right, but he made a bad mistake when he told Billy Bunter that the place he was looking for was Woppleton Manor.

AND WHAT'S MORE - THE GHOST OF WOPPLETON MANOR HAS BEEN SEEN JUST LATELY AND NEARLY ALL MY SILVER KNIVES AND FORKS HAVE BEEN STOLEN!
OO-ER!

11. Woppleton Manor was the hang-out of Sir Timothy Hasbeen. It had everything from a scullery sink to a family ghost. Sir T. was entertaining his guests with a story when Billy Bunter looked in through the window.

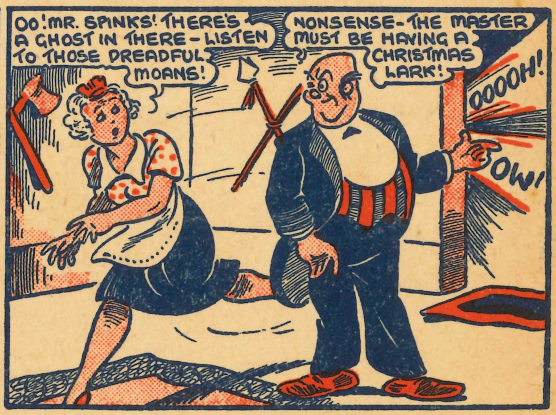


12. Sir T. was telling his guests about the ghost of the Moaning Musketeer. Billy was a Musketeer and he wasn't half moaning at seeing a lot of grub being scoffed by other people. Suddenly he was spotted.

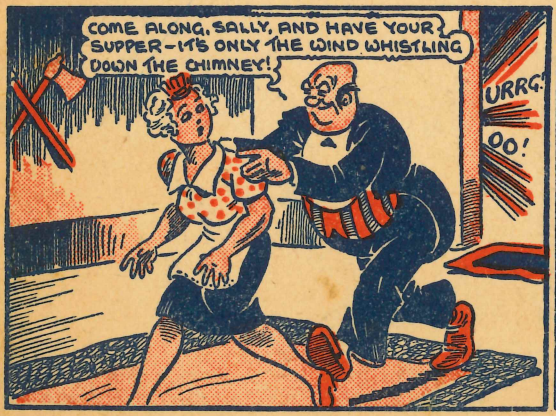
13. Miss Fanny Flapears nearly swallowed her false teeth in a scream. Then as Bunter came barging in, all the others screamed and screamed. These guests guessed that Billy was the ghost but they guessed wrong.

14. That room was cleared quicker than Billy could clear a table of grub. Billy thought something was wrong, but he didn't think for long. Not when there was a free spread waiting to be eaten—and nobody there to eat it.

15. The sight of all that grub spurred Billy on—but the silly chump didn't know that his spur had caught in a curtain. For the second time that evening the fat lad tried his best to dent the ground.


OO! MR. SPINKS! THERE'S A GHOST IN THERE - LISTEN TO THOSE DREADFUL MOANS!
NONSENSE - THE MASTER MUST BE HAVING A CHRISTMAS LARK!
OOOOH!
OW!

16. CONK! The fat lad walloped himself with a faceful of floor. The moaning groan he gave out would have made the real Moaning Musketeer sound like a whisper in the fog.



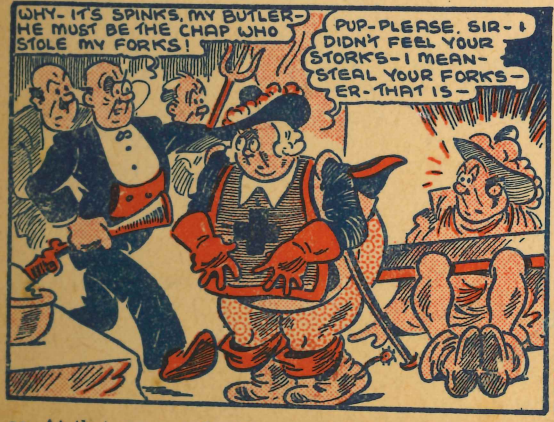
17. All Sir Timothy's servants were in a tiz-woz—except Spinks. He was the butler and he didn't believe in ghosts. So he said, anyway, to Sally the maid, as he made her trot off for her supper.

18. Meanwhile, Billy had dug his chin out of the carpet and got to his feet again. He didn't even think it strange that he didn't see Quelchy and the others there. All he could see was grub, *grub* and still more *GRUB!*

19. Tuck, and plenty of it—that suited Bunter down to the ground. The fat lad was in good form for a feed, and he started to sit down on a form at the table. Then another Musketeer came buzzing in.

20. Bunter blinked—then blinked again. This bloke was the blinking limit talking all that tosh about being the Moaning Musketeer. Billy was so surprised he asked him to sit down and have some grub.

21. But the Moaning Musketeer looked like making a meal of the fat lad. He leaped forward, waving his outsize tooth-pick in the air—just as Billy sat down right on the end of the form. For the third time Bunter fell—but it was a lucky third. SMACK! Up came the other end of the form right on the Musketeer's molars. For a few moments the Musketeer swayed backwards and forwards, and then with a gentle sigh, folded up—and sat down.


WHY - IT'S SPINKS, MY BUTLER - HE MUST BE THE CHAP WHO STOLE MY FORKS!
PUP-PLEASE, SIR - I DIDN'T FEEL YOUR STORKS - I MEAN - STEAL YOUR FORKS - ER - THAT IS -

MY BRAVE BOY - IT WAS YOU WHO SOLVED THE MYSTERY OF THE MOANING MUSKETEER - NOW, EAT AS MUCH AS YOU CAN BUT LEAVE SOME FOR THE CAT!
MERRY CHRISTMAS, ALL!

22. At that moment Sir Timothy came trooping in. With him were his guests armed with pea-shooters, pop-guns, and other weapons. Great was Sir T.'s surprise when he saw who the Moaning Musketeer really was.

23. Spinks, Sir Timothy's butler, was the silver-snaffler. For bottling up the bad butler Bunter was given the biggest feed of his life. He didn't know yet, that he was in the wrong house—and he didn't jolly well care either!

DEED-A-DAY DANNY
TODAY'S GOOD DEED
AMUSE THE COWBOYS
signed Scoutmaster
WILD WEST CIRCUS
REAL COWBOYS
COWBOY'S HALF DAY TODAY
I'VE SURE CLEANED YOU GUYS OUT!
CONJURING TRICKS
OUR HALF DAY—GOT NO PICTURE MUNNY! SOB! SOB!
GLOOM
GOOD DEED
I'LL DO SOME CARD TRICKS FOR YOU SHALL I?
CARD TRICKS
CONJURING TRICKS
GOOD KID!
YOU WILL SEE I HAVE NOTHING UP MY SLEEVE
NOW WATCH VERY CLOSELY!
WHAT'S GOIN' ON?
HEY PRESTO!
CARDS UP HIS SHIRT EH?
JAKES A DIRTY DOUBLE CROSSER!
HE'S WENT AND CHEATED
NO WONDER HE WON OUR PICTURE PENNIES!
BUNG
MAKE 'EM THINK I CHEATED WOULD YAH
BUNG
BANG
BULLET PROOF
NEVER MIND DANNY! HERES A MEDAL FOR YOU

MICKEY'S PAL THE WIZARD

Akbar el Bagrag, the wizard, takes Mickey and Betty to meet Robin Hood.

Silas Marley Burns Mickey's Book!

MICKEY ROYSTON was sitting reading a book by the fire. Suddenly he looked up, and said to his little sister Betty, who was setting the tea :

" Gosh, Betty, this isn't half a fine yarn ! "

" What's it about, Mickey ? " asked Betty.

" It's about Robin Hood and his merry men," said Mickey.

" But who was Robin Hood, Mickey ? " asked Betty.

" He was an outlaw who lived hundreds of years ago," replied Mickey. " He and his men used to live in a great wood called Sherwood Forest. But, although he was an outlaw, Robin Hood was a very brave and noble sort of man, and he was very kindhearted. The only people he ever robbed were rich nobles and barons who were cruel and mean, and who used to grind down the poor. Robin Hood used to help the poor. The rich nobles and barons simply hated him, of course, and they were always trying to catch him."

" I don't wonder, the nasty things," cried Betty. " But was there really such a person as Robin Hood, Mickey, or is it all just a story ? "

" No, there really was a Robin Hood," began Mickey. " He used to wear a suit of Lincoln green——"

" He did nothing of the sort ! " cut in a harsh and snarling voice. " There wasn't never no such chap as Robin Hood. It's all a pack of silly rot, the whole thing ! "

Mickey and Betty turned. Their uncle, Silas Marley, the miser, had come into the room.

Silas Marley was a thin, scraggy sort of man. He kept a secondhand shop, and he had a mean, cunning face.

The reason why Mickey and Betty lived with Silas Marley was because their own parents were dead. But the miser was very cruel to the two children, and he was so mean and greedy that folks said he even grudged Mickey and Betty the food they ate.

" I've told ye afore that I'll not have ye filling your head with such rubbish ! " cried Silas Marley, snatching the book out of Mickey's hand and throwing it into the fire. " Robin Hood, indeed ! There never was such a chap, and them what says there was is telling lies ! "

" But, uncle, that was a book out of the school library ! " cried Mickey, in dismay. " Now that you've burned it you'll have to pay for it ! "

The very thought of having to fork out some money to pay for the burned book sent the greedy miser nearly mad with rage.

" Why didn't you say the book was out of the school library, you brat ? " he shouted, catching Mickey such a cruel cuff round the head that it nearly knocked Mickey off his chair.

" Oh, no, please, uncle, don't hit Mickey ! " cried Betty, running between her brother and the raging miser. " Your tea's ready. I've made you some lovely toast. Don't let it get cold."

Now, Silas Marley was a very greedy man, and he simply loved hot, buttered toast. So he contented himself with giving Mickey another savage smack round the head. Then he pulled his chair up to the table and started to eat all the toast, leaving none for Mickey and Betty.

But all through tea he kept on grumbling and growling at having to pay for the school library book.

Finishing his tea, he pushed back his chair and rose to his feet.

" Another thing," he sneered, " I can prove there was no such chap as Robin Hood, because if there was why wasn't he catched ? D'you mean to tell me that all them powerful nobles and barons couldn't ha' catched a common, low-down robber like Robin Hood ? 'Course they could. They'd ha' catched him and hanged him. But they didn't catch him and hang him because he wasn't there to be catched and hanged. There wasn't never no sich chap, so don't let me hear you two brats saying there was! "

With that Silas Marley wiped the crumbs from his cruel, thin-lipped mouth with the back of his dirty hand, and went stumping downstairs to his little second-hand shop on the floor below.

" Oh, Mickey, I'm ever so sorry about your book," cried Betty. " But I'm sure uncle's wrong about Robin Hood. There must have been a gentleman called Robin Hood, if the book said so ! "

" I know there must," said Mickey. " But uncle's always trying to spoil our fun——"

" Indeed he is, the miserable dog ! " thundered a sudden mighty voice. " What has thy wretched uncle been doing to thee now, O Youth Who Delighteth Mine Eyes ? "

Mickey and Betty quickly turned round. Standing there, in the middle of the room, was a tall, bearded man wearing a green turban and long green robes.

Behold—Robin Hood!

THE name of the newcomer was Akbar el Bagrag. He had a fierce hooked nose, glittering eyes and a long, straggling beard.

Akbar el Bagrag was a wizard who had been imprisoned for two thousand years in a brass bottle. This brass bottle had stood for a long time in Silas Marley's dingy little secondhand shop.

Neither the miser nor anyone else had dreamed for an instant that there was a wizard imprisoned in the bottle. But one day, Silas Marley had sold the bottle to Squire Halston of the Hall.

The miser had told Mickey to take it up to the Hall, but on the way, the bottle had rolled off the little tumble-down barrow, and bounded to the side of the road.

The stopper had been knocked out of the bottle and the wizard was freed.

The old chap was so grateful to Mickey for this that he was always popping up to ask Mickey how he could reward him.

He knew all about how unkind Silas Marley was to Mickey and Betty, and more than once he had punished the miser very severely indeed.

" Tell me, what has thy wicked uncle been doing to thee now, O Most Noble Of Youths ? " he thundered.

" He's burned Mickey's library book which was all about Robin Hood," cried Betty. " And he says there never was a Robin Hood. He says it's all fibs ! "

" 'Tis the dog himself who fibs ! " thundered the wizard in a terrible voice. " How dare he say there was no such man as Robin Hood, when 'tis well known that Robin Hood and his merry men lived in the depths of Sherwood Forest many hundreds of years ago ! "

" Then it *is* true ? " cried Betty, clapping her hands with delight.

" Of a surety it is true, little maiden ! " cried the old wizard. " And to punish thy uncle Silas Marley for his wickedness, I will prove to him that it is true ! "

" What are you going to do ? " cried Mickey in alarm, for he knew the wondrous powers of the wizard, and he also knew how much the old chap disliked Silas Marley.

" Thou wilt see what I am going to do, O Most Worthy Of Youths ! " cried the wizard. " 'Tis easy for me to roll back the years, and thou and thy little sister are about to pay a visit to Merry Sherwood ! "

With the words the wizard waved his hand in the air. As he did so, an amazing thing happened to Mickey and Betty.

The room in which they were standing vanished completely, and Mickey and

Mickey's eyes opened wide as out of the bottle swirled a cloud of greenish smoke, which changed into a tall, bearded man in a green turban and long green robes.

Betty found themselves standing in a great dark wood.

It was night, but through the trees Mickey and Betty could see the leaping flames of a big camp fire. There were a lot of men sitting round the camp fire singing lustily.

At sight of Mickey and Betty standing watching them from the dark shadow of the trees, one of the men jumped quickly to his feet and came striding towards them.

He was a tall, handsome man with kindly eyes.

" Why, 'tis Mickey and Betty ! " he cried. " Welcome to Merry Sherwood ! "

" Are you Robin Hood ? " asked Betty.

" Yes, little maiden, and these are my men," cried Robin Hood. " We've been expecting you, so come and join us round the fire ! "

Just how Robin Hood and his merry men could have been expecting them, neither Mickey nor Betty knew. But they guessed that the old wizard had fixed it for them somehow.

Amongst Robin Hood's band were the giant Little John and fat, jolly Friar Tuck, and all the other men of whom Mickey had been reading in his book.

Maid Marion, also, was there. She came forward into the firelight and sat down beside Betty and put her arm round her, so that Betty didn't feel in the least bit frightened.

" 'Tis glad I am to see you, Mickey," cried Robin Hood. " For to-night you and I are going to beard the Baron Marley in his stronghold ! "

" The Baron Marley ? " cried Mickey. " And who might he be, sir ? "

" He's the cruellest, wickedest and most cunning Baron in the whole of the countryside ! " cried Robin Hood. " He is known as Silas de Marley, the Miser Baron and he lives in Marley Castle, an hour's march from here. 'Tis said that he has there a hoard of gold and riches greater even than our good King, Richard the Lion-Heart. He has gained his great riches by robbing the poor and the defenceless, taking everything they had. What is more, the villain has sworn to catch me and my band and to hang us from the highest turrets of his castle ! "

At these words a great shout of laughter went up from Robin Hood's merry men, and jovial Little John started to bawl :

" *The Baron de Marley wishes he could Catch and hang high our brave Robin Hood !* "

" 'Tis true words you sing, Little John ! " cried Robin Hood. " But the boot is going to be on the other foot for 'tis we who are going to catch the Baron Marley and hang him from his own turrets ! "

" But he has over five hundred men-at-arms in his castle," said Maid Marion fearfully.

" It matters not how many he has," cried Robin Hood. " Our plans are well laid, and long before morning Marley Castle and its wicked Baron will be in our hands. Mickey and I will gain admittance to the castle by pretending to be two wandering minstrels. Come, Mickey, let us get ourselves ready ! "

Baron Marley is Trapped !

FEW would have recognised Mickey when, a little while later, he set off through the wood with Robin Hood. He had changed into ragged doublet and hose, a thin and threadbare cape was buttoned round his neck, and his face and hands had been dyed brown with walnut stain.

A harp was slung on his shoulder and he looked for all the world like a minstrel's boy.

Robin Hood himself had drawn a ragged cloak across his shoulders, and looked just like a wandering minstrel.

And as they walked through the wood, Mickey asked Robin Hood many excited questions about the adventures of the Outlaw Chief and his merry men beneath the greenwood tree.

Wonderful indeed, were the tales which Robin Hood told Mickey about the adventures of himself and his men ever since they had been outlawed by bad

Held firmly by Little John and Friar Tuck, Baron Marley stared at the Wandering Minstrel. "Who—who are you?" he stammered. The minstrel flung aside his cloak. It was Robin Hood!

Prince John, who was ruling the land whilst his gallant brother, Richard the Lion-Heart, was away on a Crusade.

As he and Mickey emerged from the wood and approached the grim, forbidding stronghold of the Baron Marley, the pair of them walked as though they were utterly foot-sore and weary.

Two sour-faced men-at-arms were standing on guard at the drawbridge of Marley Castle. As Robin Hood and Mickey approached, the two guards crossed their long spears so as to bar the way.

"Begone, ye vagabonds!" snarled one of the men. "We want none of your sort here!"

"Pray let us enter, my masters," whined Robin Hood. "We have come a long way and are very weary!"

"Be off with you, I say!" shouted the guard angrily. "On your way, ye knaves, else I will spit ye with this spear!"

Robin Hood sighed.

"So be it," he said wearily. "Yet had ye but let us enter we could have given your lord, the Baron Marley, news of one whom it is well known that he seeketh with spear and sword!"

"What's that?" cried the guard. "Of whom are ye speaking, knave?"

"Of Robin Hood," replied the Outlaw Chief. "As we came through the Forest of Sherwood we rested at the camp fire of him and his men. With the dawn they plan to march on Nottingham to hang the Sheriff there. When that is done they will return here to take the Baron Marley by trick and treachery, though what that trick and treachery is I could not learn!"

"It matters not, ye've learned enough!" cried the guard excitedly.

" The Baron must know of this. Come, I will take ye to him ! "

In the darkness Robin Hood nudged Mickey and winked at him as the guard led the way quickly across the drawbridge, then across a big courtyard and into the main hall of the castle.

Late though the hour was, the huge stone-floored hall was full of men sitting eating and drinking at long tables which ran almost the whole length of the hall.

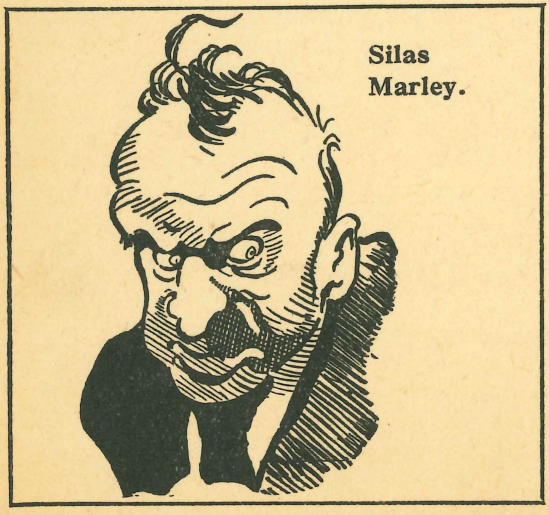
At the head of one of the tables sat the Baron Silas de Marley himself. As Mickey and Robin Hood were hurried towards him, Mickey gave a great start and was very thankful indeed for his disguise.

For the Baron Silas de Marley was none other than Mickey's uncle, Silas Marley, the miser !

" My lord, this wandering minstrel brings news of Robin Hood ! " cried the guard, bowing low before the Baron. " He has rested at the outlaw's camp fire in the heart of Sherwood Forest, and brings word of a march on Nottingham to take place with the dawn ! "

" What ? " screamed Baron Marley, glaring at Robin Hood. " That dog of an outlaw is marching on Nottingham, ye say ? For what purpose does he march there, ye knave ? "

" To hang the Sheriff, my lord," whined Robin Hood. " For the Sheriff is his bitter enemy. Then, when he has hanged him, he plans to march here and take you, my lord, by trick and treachery and hang you from your castle turrets ! "



Silas Marley.

The effect of these words on the Baron Marley was simply frightful. He leapt to his feet, his thin, mean face so twisted with rage that it looked absolutely hideous.

" He marches for Nottingham at dawn, d'you say ? " he screamed. " Then, by thunder, he'll never reach it. I'll ambush him with a force a dozen times as strong as his. I'll catch the dog and all the villainous knaves who follow him. I'll have him brought here and he'll never leave this castle alive ! "

Still shaking with fury, he started screaming orders to his men, and there was such a hustling and bustling as you never saw in your life before.

His men-at-arms hastily strapped on their armour and seized their spears. His bowmen ran to get their bows and arrows and, within a very short time, nearly every man in the castle was ready to march out to ambush Robin Hood.

The Baron Marley wasn't going himself, of course. Oh dear, no ! He was grand at sending other people out to fight, but he was far too big a coward to go out and fight himself.

What was more, in spite of his threats about what he was going to do to Robin Hood, he was scared stiff of him and his merry men.

So he left the ambushing of Robin Hood to one of his captains.

" And don't you dare come back without the dog," he screamed, as his men marched away across the drawbridge. " If you do, I'll—I'll throw you into the dungeons ! "

He went back into the great hall, where Robin Hood and Mickey were sitting pretending to be eating hungrily from a couple of greasy plates.

" If you think I'm going to give you a reward for bringing me this news of Robin Hood, you're mistaken," he sneered. " I never give anything away."

" All the reward we crave, my lord, is to be permitted to sleep here this night, for we are very weary," said Robin Hood.

" Oh, well, sleeping here doesn't cost anything," said the Baron Marley. " You can sleep on the floor if you like. But, mind, you're going on your way first thing in the morning ! "

" Yes, lord," said Robin Hood humbly.

He and Mickey stretched themselves out on the floor in the now deserted hall. But they didn't sleep. When the Baron Marley had retired and the castle was hushed, Robin Hood crept stealthily to the main door and unbolted it.

Outside were his merry men who had seized, bound and gagged the two guards on the drawbridge.

" Welcome to Marley Castle," said Robin Hood with a low laugh.

The Baron Marley was counting his gold in his bedroom when suddenly a dozen men in Lincoln green rushed in and overpowered him.

" Help ! " he screamed in terror, struggling madly in the grip of his captors. " Leave me alone—lemme go—HELP ! "

" Silence, you cowardly dog ! " cried a voice sternly.

Shaking with terror, Baron Marley stared pop-eyed at the man who had spoken. It was the Wandering Minstrel.

" Who—who are you ? " stammered the Baron

Laughing, the minstrel flung aside the ragged cloak.

" I am Robin Hood," replied the minstrel sternly. " I am here to avenge all the poor, defenceless people whom you have cruelly robbed, you villain. When I have hanged you from your own battlements, I will take your gold and riches and give it to the poor and needy ! "

At these words, Baron Silas de Marley fell on his knees, his bony hands clasped.

" Mercy ! " he screamed. " Spare me—mercy—oh, don't hang me—oh, don't take my gold and riches ! "

" Bring him along ! " said Robin Hood sternly.

" Well, what thinkest thou of the fate which is now in store for thy cruel and wicked uncle, O Youth Who Delighteth Mine Eyes ? " boomed a deep voice beside Mickey.

Mickey turned. Standing beside him

Robin Hood

was old Akbar el Bagrag, the wizard.

" Oh, don't let uncle be hanged, Mr. Bagrag ! " cried Mickey. " I know he's cruel and wicked, but do save him this time ! "

The wizard sighed.

" Indeed thou hast a Kindly and a Noble Heart," he said, " and I can refuse thee nothing. Therefore let it be as thou wishest. Thy uncle is spared ! "

With the words the castle and everything vanished, and Mickey found himself standing once more in the little living-room at home.

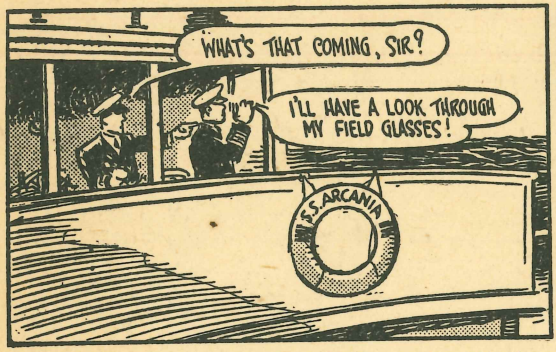
Betty was with him, but before either of them could say a word, they heard Silas Marley rushing upstairs from the shop.

" Oh, what a dream I've had ! " cried the miser, bursting into the room. " I must've dozed off for a minute or two down there in the shop, and I dreamed that that nasty Robin Hood had hold of me and was going to hang me. It was so real that it's been a lesson to me. I'm not going to be cruel and mean and unkind again. I'm not really ! "

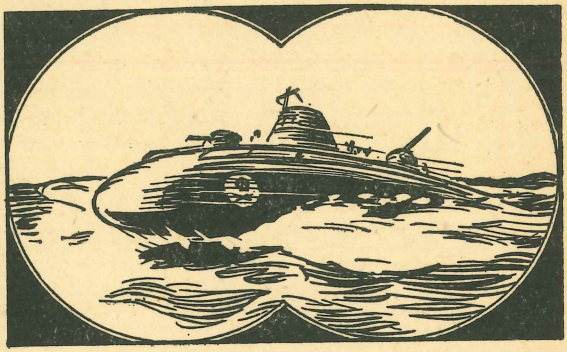
Nor was he. He'd had such a fright, thanks to the old wizard, that he was a much better and kinder man for a long time afterwards.

THE END

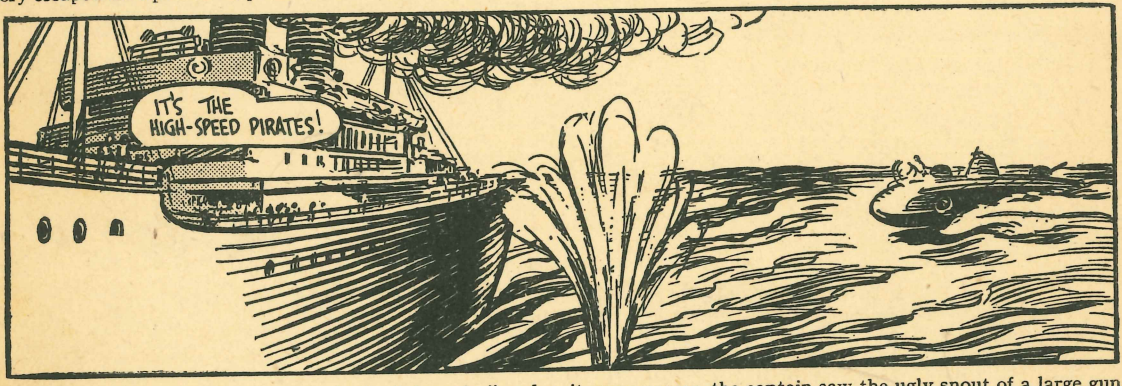
SEXTON BLAKE AND THE HIGH-SPEED PIRATES.



1. The steamship " Arcania " of the Green Star Shipping Line ploughed its way across the billowing waves of the Atlantic homeward bound for England. The first mate was just making his report to the captain when suddenly a hoarse cry escaped his lips and he pointed out to sea.



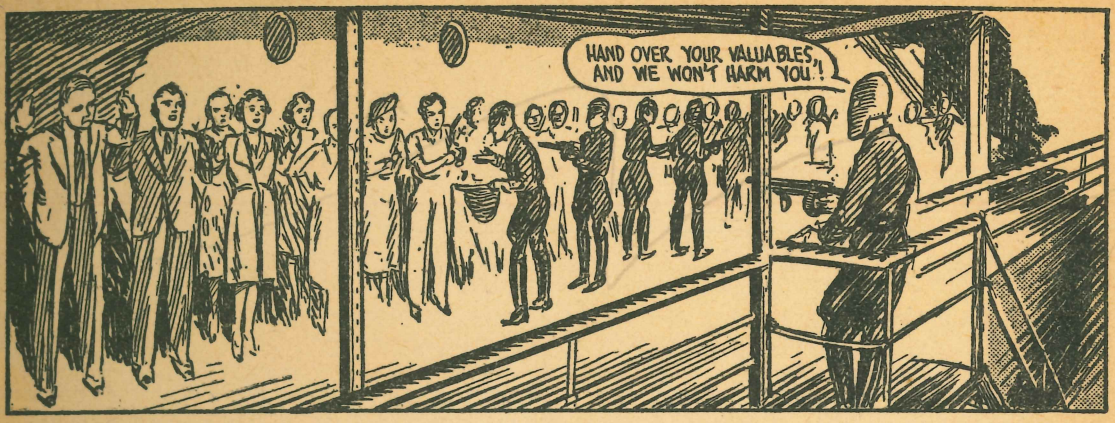
2. Far away on the horizon he had spotted a swiftly moving craft. Anxiously, the captain trained his powerful fieldglasses on the other boat. He made out a sinister black speedboat racing through the water—and the sign of the *skull and crossbones* was painted on the side!



3. The speedboat was rushing towards the " Arcania " and as it came nearer, the captain saw the ugly snout of a large gun suddenly belch flame. The captain realised at once what was happening. The " Arcania " was being attacked by the terror of the seas, the HIGH-SPEED PIRATES. A shell fell into the sea a few yards away from the side of the liner, and a huge column of water was flung into the air. With terrified cries, hundreds of passengers poured out on to the decks to see what was happening.

4. The captain of the " Arcania " turned as his wireless operator mounted the bridge. The operator had just received a message from the Pirates informing the captain that he must surrender his ship at once.

5. The captain knew that, unarmed as his ship was, the guns of the Pirates would make short work of the " Arcania." There was nothing else for him to do but order his engineer to stop the ship's engines. As the liner lost speed, the Pirate boat drew up alongside. Strange black-clad figures appeared on the deck.



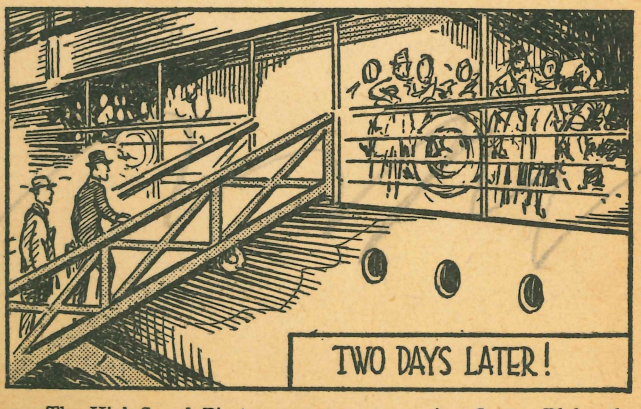
6. Armed with sub-machine guns, the Pirates swarmed up on to the deck of the " Arcania " where all the passengers were lined up. The Pirates were led by a strange figure clothed all in black with a mask of *steel* over his head. Keeping his machine-gun trained on the passengers, he ordered them to hand over their valuables to his men. Fearful of what might happen if they disobeyed, the " Arcania's " passengers dropped their money and valuables into the sacks held out by the Pirates. The Man in the Steel Mask chuckled. This was another easy haul for him and his villainous crew.

MEANWHILE — BACK IN LONDON, SEXTON BLAKE HAS A VISITOR!
GUV'NOR — HERE'S SIR CHARLES CARTER AND HIS SECRETARY TO SEE YOU!
HE'S THE CHIEF OF THE GREEN STAR SHIPPING LINE — SHOW HIM IN, TINKER!

7. Whilst the Pirates, flushed with victory, were returning to their high-speed boat, Sexton Blake, the famous detective, was receiving an important visitor in London. Tinker, Blake's plucky young assistant, opened the door to Sir Charles Carter, the chief of the Green Star Shipping Line.

8. With Sir Charles was his secretary, a thin-faced man with a little moustache. Tinker, standing at the back with his hands in his pockets, didn't particularly like the look in the secretary's shifty eyes. Watching his guv'nor, Tinker listened intently to what Sir Charles had to say.

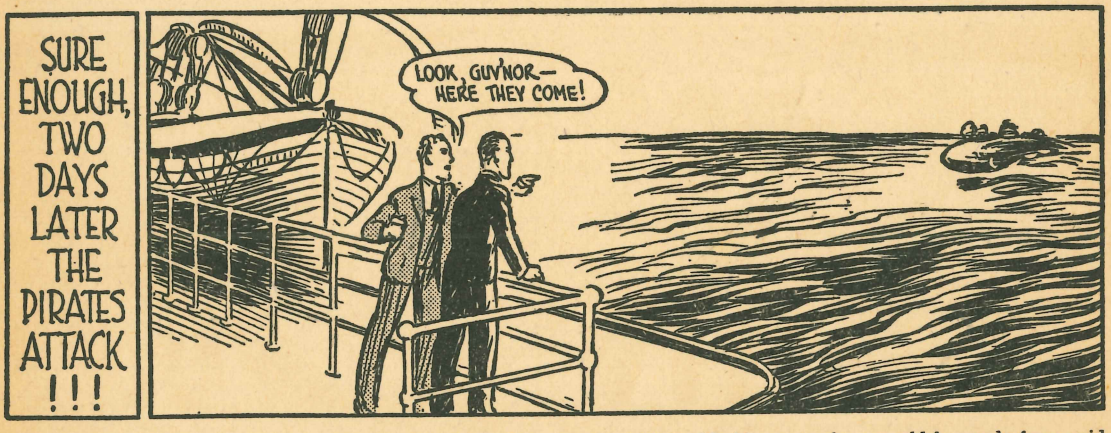
9. Sir Charles wanted Sexton Blake to tackle the High-Speed Pirates. After listening to what Sir Charles had to tell him about these raiders of the high seas, Sexton Blake decided to sail on the next boat leaving Southampton.



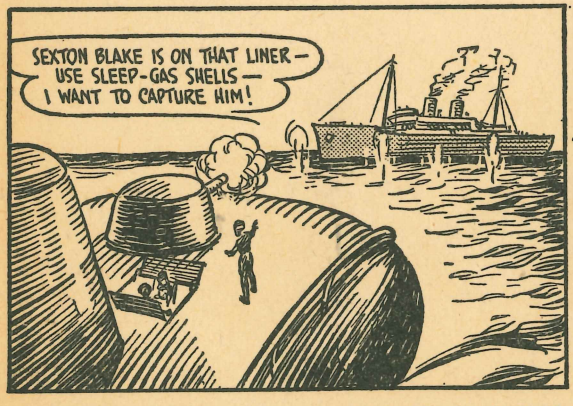
10. The High-Speed Pirates were now up against Sexton Blake, the world's greatest detective, and Tinker knew it would be a fight to the finish. Two days later, the famous detective and his assistant mounted the gang-plank on to the liner at Southampton. They were on the brink of a new adventure.

11. As soon as he was on board, Sexton Blake and Tinker made their way to the captain's cabin. The captain had been told by his chief, Sir Charles Carter, that Blake would be sailing with him, and he welcomed the detective with a friendly hand-shake.

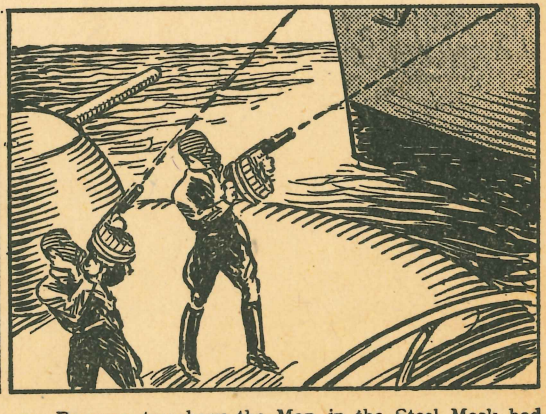
12. It was a mystery to the captain why Sexton Blake should have chosen his ship to sail on, but Blake rapidly explained that a false rumour had been set about to the effect that a shipment of gold was aboard the liner. The captain nodded his head as though he began to understand.



13. Blake knew that as soon as the High-Speed Pirates learned about the gold shipment, plans would be made for a raid on the liner. And he was right! Two days later, the Pirate's speedboat was seen racing towards the liner. Excitedly, Tinker pointed it out to his guv'nor and a grim smile played round the corners of Sexton Blake's mouth. His plan had worked, but even the famous detective didn't expect the events that followed rapidly. For the leader of the Pirates—the Man in the Steel Mask—knew that Sexton Blake was aboard!



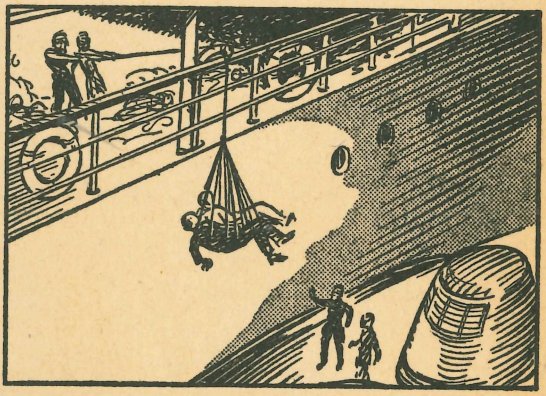
14. As the huge speedboat drew nearer, the Man in the Steel Mask stepped out on to the deck, followed by two of his men carrying queer-looking guns. Tersely, the leader of the Pirates told his men to load their guns and fire sleep-gas shells at the liner.



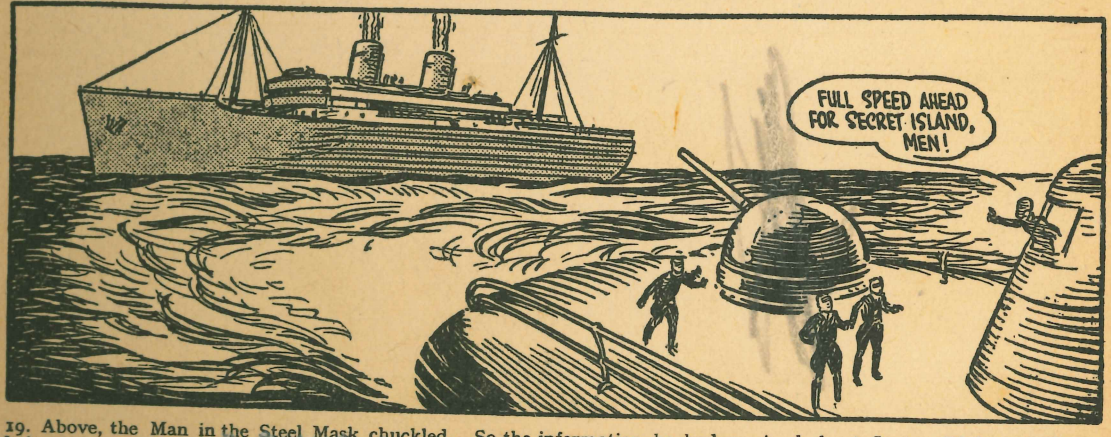
15. By some treachery the Man in the Steel Mask had received information that Sexton Blake was on board the Green Star liner, and he was determined to capture the famous detective. Swiftly the two Pirates obeyed their chief's orders.

16. Levelling their guns, the Pirates fired the sleep-gas shells on to the deck of the liner, which had already come to a stop. The Pirates' speedboat was now so near to the liner that the shells could not fail to score direct hits. The shells dropped with a slight *plop !* and the gas fumes spread over the ship. One by one, the passengers and the ship's crew were overcome by the gas, and sank down, fast asleep. Waiting until the gas had cleared a little, the Man in the Steel Mask ordered his two men to put on their gas-masks and follow him on to the liner.

17. The Pirate Chief's steel mask seemed to be gas-proof as he led his two men over to where Sexton Blake and Tinker were lying asleep among the rest of the passengers. Pointing to the detective and his assistant he ordered his men to drag them over to the ship's rail.

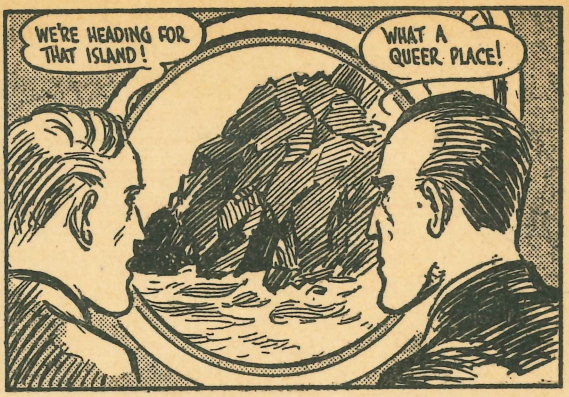


18. Quickly, Blake and Tinker were lowered on to the deck of the Pirates' high-speed boat and, still unconscious, were carried roughly below and chained up in the hold. Sexton Blake had certainly not foreseen the fact of his being betrayed by some unknown traitor.

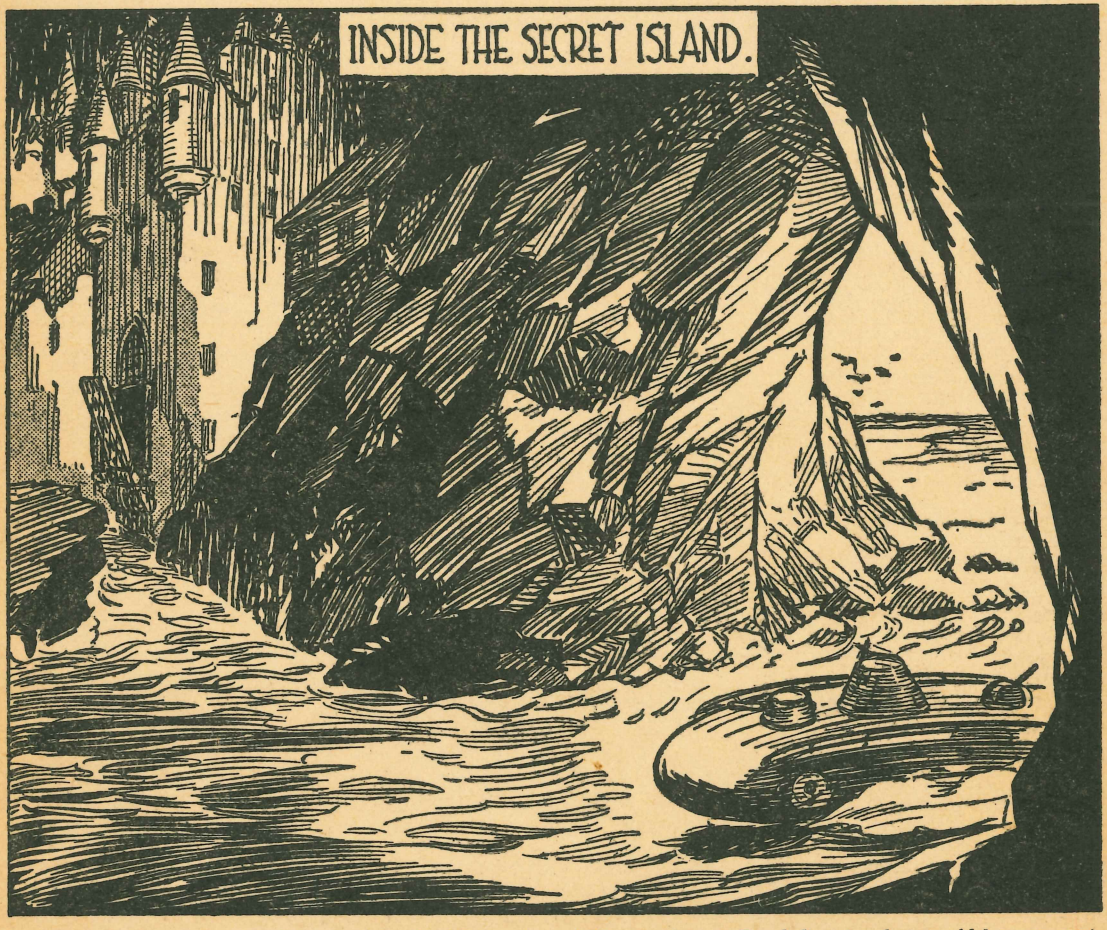


19. Above, the Man in the Steel Mask chuckled. So the information he had received about Sexton Blake and Tinker being aboard the liner had been correct. His plan, which he had carefully thought out, had worked perfectly. He shouted to his men to make full speed for the secret island, and as the speedboat drew away, he watched the drifting Green Star liner with a sneering grin. With everyone asleep on board, the liner was in real danger of being wrecked, but the Man in the Steel Mask didn't care. He had triumphed !

20. Some hours later Sexton Blake opened his eyes and yawned. Then, suddenly remembering what had happened, sat up and shook Tinker. His assistant stared dreamily up at him and then, as he also remembered, shook his head to clear it. Quickly Blake realised that they were prisoners of the High-Speed Pirates.



21. Chained up securely as they were, the famous detective and his assistant were unable to make any attempt at escape. Standing to their feet, however, they were able to peer out of a porthole. The Pirates' boat was now losing speed and then, as a slight mist ahead lifted from the face of the sea, a strange sight met their startled eyes.



22. They were nearing a small, rocky island with no sign of life anywhere. Puzzled as to what would happen next, Blake watched intently. He uttered a low gasp as the Pirates' speedboat suddenly altered its course and dived into a large opening in the caves. Tinker rubbed his eyes at what they saw next. A sinister, forbidding castle had been built into the rocky walls of the huge cave. So this was the secret stronghold of the High-Speed Pirates! Sexton Blake and Tinker prepared themselves for some amazing adventures. (*For more Sexton Blake thrills, turn to page 104.*)

ALADDIN AND HIS WONDERFUL LAMP!

WITH HIS MA - WIDOW TWANKY

WASHEE WASHEE CLEAN 'ERE

YOUNG ALADDIN AND HIS MA - THE WIDOW TWANKEY RAN A CAMEL GARAGE IN OLD PEKIN! TRADE WAS SO BAD EVEN THE CAMELS HAD THE HUMP! THE WIDOW TWANKEY SIGHED! "WE'LL HAVE TO SHUTTEE UP SHOPPEE SON," SHE CRIED. BUT WAS ALADDIN DOWN-HEARTED? NOT HE! HE'D GOT A BRAND NEW IDEA!

PEKIN CAMEL - GARAGE - WIDOW TWANKEY - AND SON -

YOU WATCHEE ME MA! I PAINTEE THIS WATER PUMP LIKE BARBER'S POLE AND EVERYBODY LOOKEE!

BEST CAMEL WATER

FILL-UPS FOR CAMELS ONE-A TWO-A HUMP HOSES FOR SALE!!!

BEST STRIPED PAINT

BUT WHILE ALADDIN WAS ON THE JOB WITH HIS BEST STRIPED PAINT, UP RODE CHU CHIN CHOW THE BOLD, BAD BANDIT WITH TWO OF HIS FORTY THIEVES! THEY MEANT BUSINESS ALRIGHT BUT IT WAS A BAD BUSINESS FOR YOUNG ALADDIN!

OY! FREE WATER AND EATS FOR OUR CAMELS OR OFFEE COMES YOUR NAPPER!

FLY-BY-NIGHT

OFF-KAY BOSS!

GLOOP!

BEST STRIPED PAINT

BUT CHU CHIN CHOW'S CAMEL WAS SO THIRSTY HE COULDN'T WAIT FOR HIS TURN AT THE PUMP!

YAH! FUNNY FACE! I'LL PUT THE FLYING SQUAD ON TO YOU FOR THIS! I'LL DIAL 999 - I WILL!

AND THAT'S CHINESE FOR THE SAME TO YOU WITH KNOBS ON!

YIPPEE, BIG BOYS! ONNEE YOUR WAY AND BOOK ME A FRONT SEAT WHEN YOU CHOP-CHOP HIS NAPPER OFF!

HOP ON THE LUGGAGE GRID, FELLER!

OY! I KNOW HIM!

WANTED

ALADDIN AKA ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES

PEKIN FLYING SQUAD

THAT'S HIM ALLEE RIGHT!

KEEP GOING, COPS, AND WATCHEE OUT FOR CAMEL WITH FOOTBALL JERSEY!

PEKIN FLYING SQUAD

OF COURSE - CHU CHIN CHOW HAD NO IDEA THE COPS WERE HOT ON HIS TRAIL AND HE HADN'T EVEN NOTICED THAT HIS CAMEL WAS LOOKING A BIT OFF COLOUR!

THAT'S THE CHAPPEE!

WHIZZ!

WOW!!

PLENTY MUCHEE THANKS, O MIGHTY ONE! HIS CAMEL SLUIGGEE MY BEST STRIPEE PAINT AND CATCHEE HOOPLA!

YOU CLEVER FELLER! YOU GETTEE CASHEE!

GOLD

MAGIC

AND SO YOUNG ALADDIN COLLECTED THE DIBS THAT SEE THE FAMILY BACK ON ITS FEET ONCE MORE!

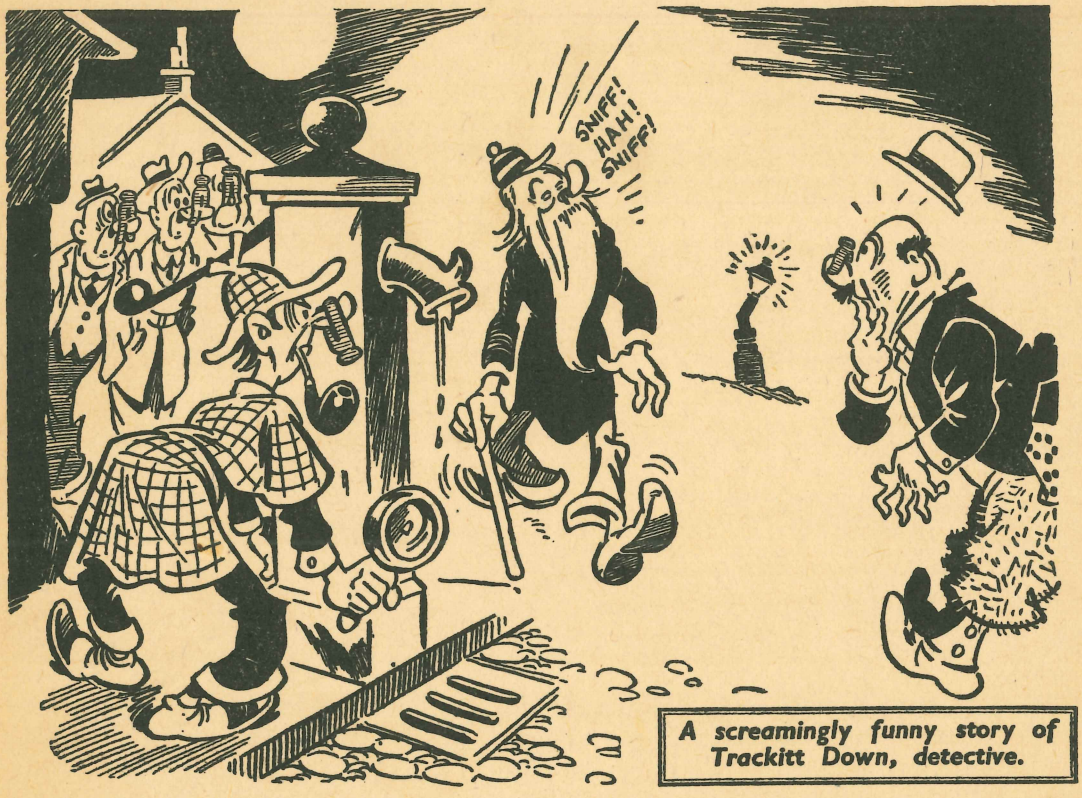
YOUR MA - SHE PROUD OF YOU, ALADDIN! YOU BUY NEW BATTERY FOR YOUR MAGIC LAMP AND BOBBEE IS OUR UNCLE!

WOOLEEWORTHS - 6D - STORE

GOLD

NOTHING OVER 6d.

MYSTERY AT TWODDLE-BY-THE-TWIGGLE



A screamingly funny story of Trackitt Down, detective.

Enter The Smell!

SOMETHING was wrong at Twoddle-by-the-Twiggle!

For instance, the peaceful little village was almost empty. Most of the shops in the High Street had their window shutters up, and the few people who were out had large clothes-pegs fixed on their noses.

P.-C. Flutterback, the village cop, however, had gone one better. Flutterback, who had the biggest nose west of Twoddle-by-the-Twiggle, had been unable to find a clothes-peg big enough to wear on his schnozzle.

He had, therefore, borrowed Mrs. Flutterback's bottle of scent, and had it dangling under his nose from a piece of string tied round each ear, rather like a horse's nose-bag.

Yes! There was something *very* wrong —it was a smell! And what a smell!

A few days ago it had settled over Twoddle-by-the-Twiggle like an October fog.

The villagers had put up with this awful state of affairs for as long as they possibly could, but as no one seemed able to find out what was wrong, the trouble had started.

The empty streets were not only due to the awful smell, but also to the fact that a public meeting had been called at the Town Hall, and nearly everyone was there.

Colonel Well-Shrabbit, the mayor, was

in charge of the meeting, and was doing his best to keep order. Not, mind you, that there was much order to keep, but the Colonel was trying to keep it, just as he kept all cricket balls, tennis balls, kites, toy aeroplanes and anything else that had the misfortune to fall into his back garden.

The Colonel was a gouty old man who always charged round in a three-wheeled bath-chair. He was also, as he told everyone, a little hard of hearing. Really, Colonel Well-Shrabbit was not only a little hard of hearing, but, as P.-C. Flutterback so often remarked, " As deaf as my kitchen sink." The only way you could make the Colonel understand what you were saying was to yell down the enormous ear-trumpet the Colonel always carried.

Mrs. Ida Kipper, whose husband owned the famous fish factory, and who was really a little jealous of the new smell, was on her feet bellowing at the top of her voice, trying to make the Colonel understand what she was saying. And, as Mrs. Kipper's voice was used as the village fire-alarm, it was some bellow.

" It's time something was done about this 'ere smell," shrilled Mrs. Kipper. " It's something crool ! "

The Colonel turned and raised his ear-trumpet towards Mrs. Kipper.

" Who's an old fool ? " he barked.

" I didn't say 'old fool,' " shouted Mrs. Kipper. " I said it's something crool."

" Yes, and you're an old fool, too," snorted the Colonel.

Then Mr. Muffin, the baker, got to his feet and started shouting.

" I agree with Mrs. Kipper. Something *must* be done. My old horse got a whiff of the smell yesterday and bolted. Took the cart with him, he did, and finished up in the village pond, with the bread floating."

Colonel Well-Shrabbit glanced sideways over the top of his ear-trumpet.

" Young Ned, boating ! " he muttered. " Really, I'm surprised. You know very well that boating is not allowed on the village pond. Boating, indeed ! It's disgraceful ! Whatever next ? "

At this point Miss Isobel Handie, the schoolmistress, chimed in.

" Never mind about that," she snapped. " What about me ! All my pupils have been sent away and I've had to close the school ! "

" What, you as well. You call me an old fool, too," raved the Colonel. " I won't have it, d'you hear ? I'm the mayor and—— "

Here Mr. Bottle, the village innkeeper, broke in and began bawling into the Colonel's ear-trumpet. For a few moments the Colonel listened and then, nodding as though he understood, turned to the villagers.

" My friends," he said, " I know you will all be pleased to hear that Mr. Bottle has arranged for some famous disinfectant to come from London. You know the stuff I mean," smiled the Colonel. " The stuff you sling about to get rid of bad smells."

Mr. Bottle mistook the Colonel's big ear-trumpet for a glass and promptly filled it with water.

" No, no," stammered Mr. Bottle, " I said no such thing ! "

" Ah, very nice of you, I'm sure, Mr. Bottle," said Colonel Well-Shrabbit ; then went on : " Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Bottle will now sing ! "

Giving up the idea of ever making the Colonel understand what he was talking about, Mr. Bottle addressed the crowd himself.

" I have arranged for Mr. Trackitt Down, the famous detective, to come to Twoddle-by-the-Twiggle and solve the mystery of the smell," he told them. " From what I have heard of Mr. Trackitt Down we can safely leave the matter in his hands."

There was much clapping of hands and wild cheers from the villagers as they heard the news. The excitement was too much for Mr. Bottle, and, fancying a drink, he looked round for the water-jug.

Mr. Bottle was a little short-sighted, and in his haste mistook the Colonel's ear-trumpet for a glass, and promptly filled it with water.

With a gurgling roar the Colonel jumped to his feet, entirely forgetting his gouty foot, and sent Mr. Bottle flying.

Mr. Bottle promptly trod on the Colonel's bandaged foot. With howls of mirth the villagers retreated from the hall, leaving the Colonel dancing madly round on one foot, and Mr. Bottle trying to disentangle himself from the Colonel's ear-trumpet.

Trackitt Down Gets To Work.

MR. TRACKITT DOWN, the famous detective, peered cautiously round the village water-pump.

" That's strange ! " he muttered to himself. " Very strange ! "

Trackitt Down had been in Twoddle-by-the-Twiggle for two days now, and had arrested nobody. He had, however, been arrested himself for removing a manhole-cover from the centre of the High Street. Whilst looking the manhole-cover over for fingerprints, something happened that he was not looking for. P.-C. Flutterback fell into the manhole !

It wasn't only the fact that P.-C. Flutterback had fallen into the manhole. Trackitt Down had spent the night in prison because P.-C. Flutterback had been wedged so firmly it had taken the entire village fire-brigade, together with the local troop of Boy Scouts, to free him.

Thanks to Mr. Bottle the detective was released the following morning, and now at last Trackitt Down was sure he was on the right trail.

He had just spotted somebody who actually seemed to enjoy the awful smell !

That somebody was an old gentleman of about sixty summers and at least fifty hard winters. He had his nose held high in the air, and every now and then he sniffed deeply, as though he were walking along the front at the seaside enjoying the sea air.

As the old chap tripped gaily down the street, Trackitt Down crept from behind the village pump and followed silently.

The trail led to the outskirts of the village, where the old boy, after taking an extra hearty sniff, turned in at the gate of a large tumbledown house.

The detective, taking cover behind a nearby gooseberry bush, settled to keep watch. He had not long to wait ! A few moments later the door opened and the old chap danced merrily out, smacking his lips as though he'd just finished a grand feed, and trotted off down the street.

" Ah-ha ! Now to see what I can discover," murmured Trackitt Down.

His carpet slippers made no noise as he moved forward.

" How to get into the house—that's the question ! " the detective said to himself.

Making his way to the front of the house, the famous discoverer of dirty work leaned against the front door.

" Now let me see," he said.

But all the sleuth saw for the next five minutes was a most brilliant array of stars. The front door had unexpectedly opened, and the carpet that covered the very hard hall floor met the detective's head with a resounding clang.

Shaking his head dizzily, Trackitt Down got to his feet and searched the house. It was empty except for the smell,

Lifting one side of the clothes peg, Trackitt Down sniffed deeply.

and here it was ten times as bad as it was outside.

Clamping his peg firmly on to his nose, the tireless 'tec crept softly down the stairs leading to the cellar.

Halting before the door, which was heavily bolted and barred on the outside, Trackitt Down stood listening. From inside the cellar came a steady hum !

Puzzled, he drew the bolts, opened the door, and peeped into the cellar. An amazing sight met his eyes !

In the centre of the room stood a large wooden tub which was filled with what looked like cold porridge. But no, it wasn't cold porridge—it wasn't even hot porridge !

Lifting one side of the clothes-peg from his nose, he sniffed deeply. Immediately his hat flew from his head, hung in the air for a few seconds, and then fell to the ground. In fact, you could almost hear its last gasp.

The detective's face turned a lovely shade of pale green and his eyes blinked once or twice, then poured with water. Hastily he clamped the peg harder on to his nose and staggered back from the tub.

He had solved the mystery of Twoddle-by-the-Twiggle.

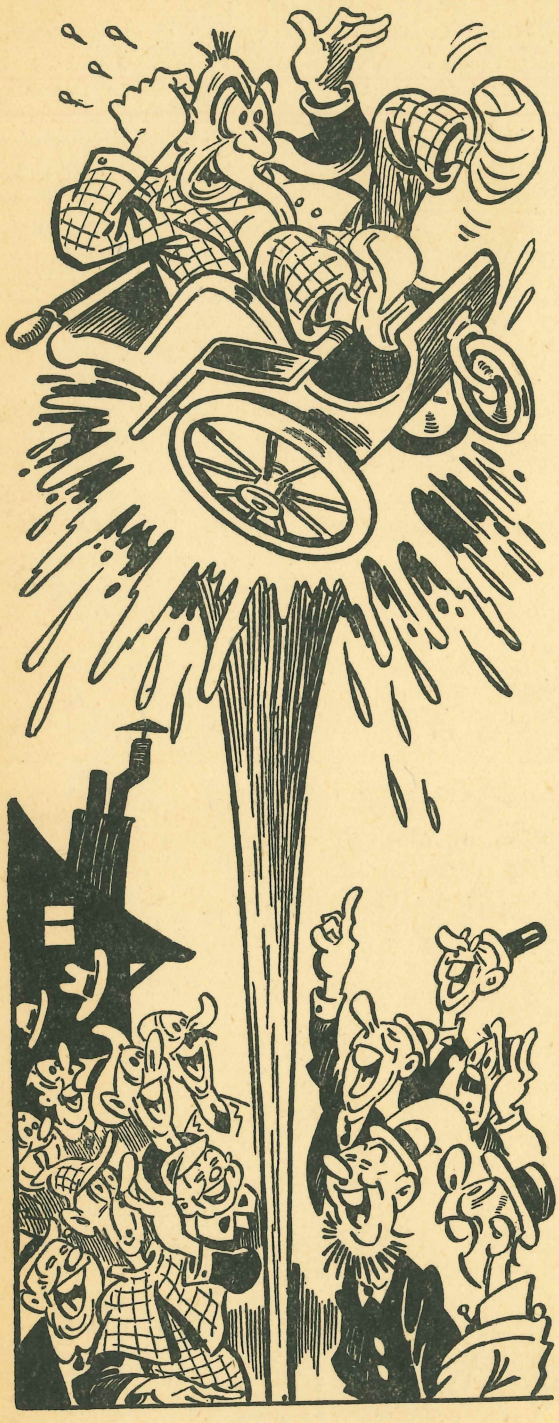
The tub was full of half-made cheese. Not ordinary cheese, by any means. Oh, no ! So powerful was the smell that only the strongest and bravest of men would have dared to approach it.

All along the wall of the cellar were cheeses ! Not that that was very surprising, for, after all, it was not the first time that Trackitt Down had seen cheeses. It was, however, the first time he had come across cheeses that had to be chained up !

There were big cheeses, little cheeses, and cheeses of every possible colour.

There was an enormous cheese that had blue lines all over it, and which looked like the map of England.

Trackitt Down had seen quite enough and, grabbing his hat, dashed out of the cellar, up the stairs, and out into the street, where for a moment he stood taking very deep breaths of fresh air.



As if from a great height, there came a faint call. The Colonel, still in his bath-chair, was at the top of the fountain.

After the smell in the cellar he needed it!

The detective made his way straight to Colonel Well-Shrabbit's house, and in a few minutes was doing his best to tell the old man of his discovery.

"Well, Colonel," he said in a very pleased voice, "I have solved the mystery."

The Colonel blew strongly down his now-battered ear-trumpet to remove any drops of water that might still be there, and placed it to his listener.

"History!" he barked. "History! No, never did like it!"

Trackitt Down suddenly remembered the Colonel was deaf and, placing his mouth close to the ear-trumpet, bellowed into it:

"No, not history—mystery. It's cheese!"

"Peas?" grunted the Colonel. "No thanks, I've just had something to eat. Besides, I don't like them."

At last the detective managed to explain to Colonel Well-Shrabbit what he had discovered. As he finished, the old man let out a mighty roar.

"Bloggs," he shouted to his man-servant, "fetch me that barrel of gunpowder we had left over from the battle of Waterloo."

Bloggs departed, to return a few moments later staggering under the weight of a huge barrel.

"Wha-what do you want gunpowder for?" stuttered Trackitt Down, staring at the barrel.

"More, man?" roared the Colonel. "We don't want any more! I'm only going to blow up one house, not the entire village! Come, let us waste no more time!"

Bloggs and the sleuth helped the Colonel into his bath-chair and set out for the mysterious house.

The Colonel insisted on clasping the barrel of gunpowder in his arms, and as Trackitt Down, who was pushing the bath-chair, puffed and gasped his way down the High Street, a crowd of villagers joined in.

On reaching the house at the outskirts of the village, the Colonel fiercely ordered Bloggs to take the barrel into the cellar;

and, with an extra clothes-peg on his nose, Bloggs made his way rather shakily down the steps into the cellar.

Carefully placing the barrel of gunpowder on the floor in the middle of the cellar, Bloggs rolled up some paper and stuck it in the top of the barrel. Then, setting light to the paper, he dashed up the cellar stairs and outside to where, by now, the entire village had gathered.

Barely had Bloggs reached the crowd when, with a mighty W-H-O-O-M ! the house rose into the sky.

So interested was everyone with what was happening that when the Colonel's bath-chair started moving slowly down the sloping path towards the spot where the house had stood nobody noticed it.

Slowly the chair ran on, and, although the Colonel raved and roared as loud as he could, he attracted not the slightest attention. Reaching the very spot on which the house had so recently stood, the chair came to a halt.

At last the Colonel managed to attract a little notice, and the villagers turned in the direction from whence his cries were coming.

They were too late, however, for as Bloggs and Trackitt Down started forward the Colonel and his bath-chair suddenly vanished from their sight, and in its place was a fountain of water at least sixty feet high.

For a moment nothing was heard but the rush of water, and then, as if from a great height, there came a faint call. Looking up, the villagers could just see the Colonel, still in his bath-chair, at the very top of the fountain.

" Eeeh ! Land sakes ! " exclaimed one of the oldest villagers. " It be that there underground river called the Little Twiggle. It disappeared when I were a boy—let's see now. That must be about a hundred and twenty-five years ago."

Someone asked how the Colonel was to be got down from his present position, but at the rate the water was rising in the village, it seemed that the village would soon be up to the Colonel.

. . . . . .

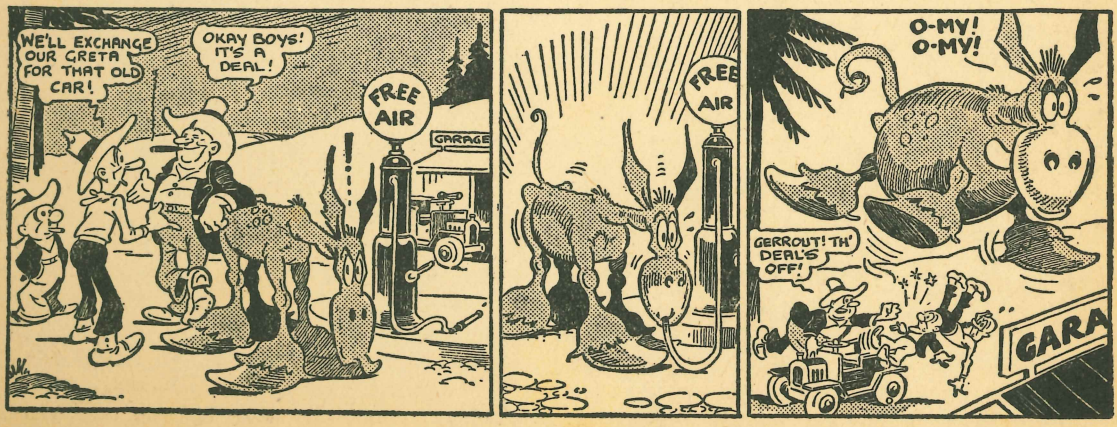
The last Trackitt Down, the famous detective, saw of Colonel Well-Shrabbit, mayor of Twoddle-by-the-Twiggle, he was sailing downstream in a very old bath-chair, which he was bailing out for all he was worth with his ear-trumpet.

Quickly, Trackitt Down turned the table he was paddling with the leg of a chair, in the opposite direction. He had no desire at that moment to meet Colonel Well-Shrabbit.

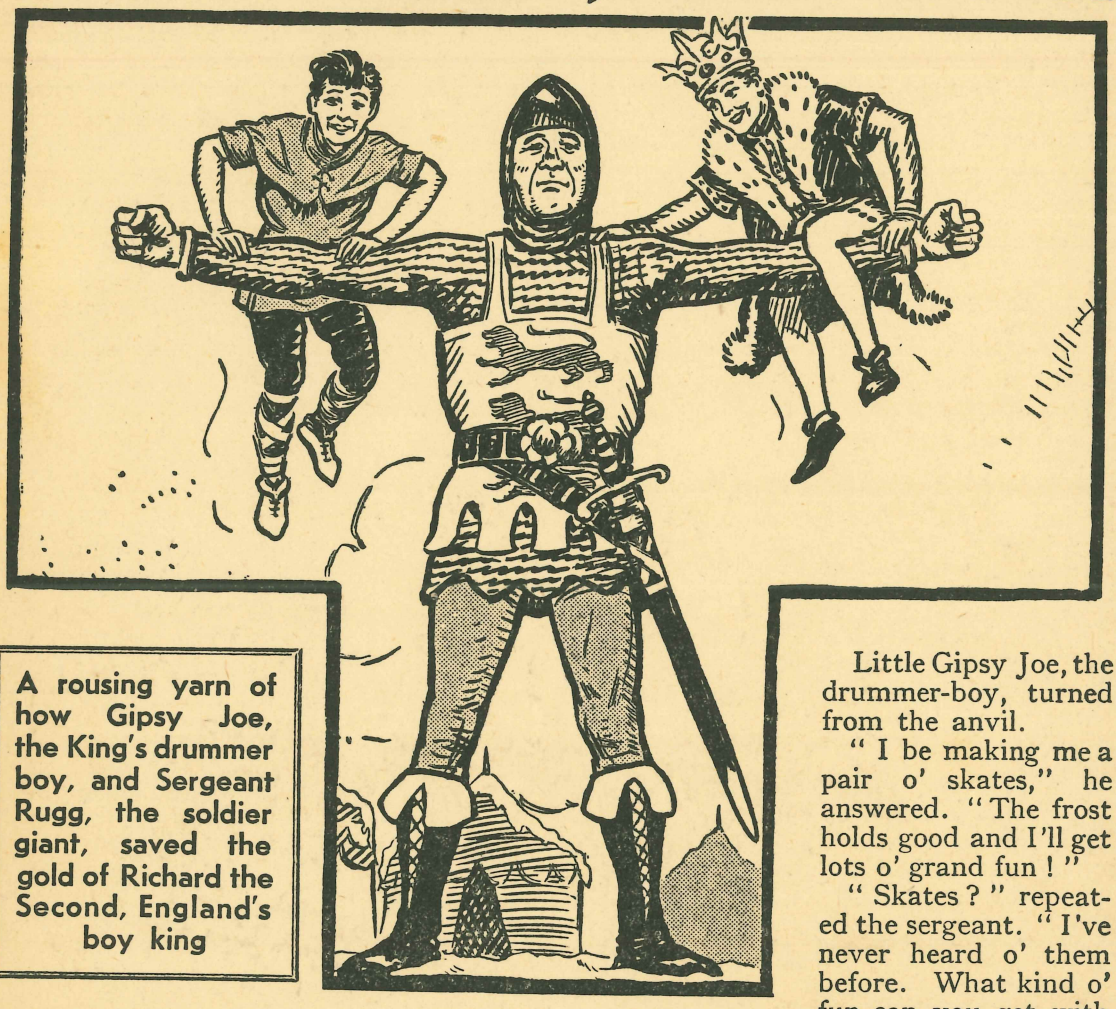
For, between them, Trackitt Down and Colonel Well-Shrabbit had not only got rid of the smell, but they had also got rid of Twoddle-by-the-Twiggle !

THE END

MIKE, SPIKE AND GRETA . . . GRETA GOES UP IN THE WORLD!



JOE'S CHUM, KING DICK



A rousing yarn of how Gipsy Joe, the King's drummer boy, and Sergeant Rugg, the soldier giant, saved the gold of Richard the Second, England's boy king

The King's Gold

RICHARD THE SECOND, the boy king of England, and his soldiers were at war with Wat Tyler and his rebel army. Lately the rebels had been lying low, and for the present all was peaceful in the boy king's camp.

"Oho, my cheeky cock-spadger!" boomed Sergeant Rugg, the biggest and strongest soldier in the boy king's army. "Methinks some drill would be good for you. What be you wasting your time at here by the smith's forge?"

Little Gipsy Joe, the drummer-boy, turned from the anvil.

"I be making me a pair o' skates," he answered. "The frost holds good and I'll get lots o' grand fun!"

"Skates?" repeated the sergeant. "I've never heard o' them before. What kind o' fun can you get with skates? What do you do with them?"

Gipsy Joe grinned. You see, in the far-off days of young King Richard skates were almost unheard of in England. Gipsy Joe had learned about them from a Dutchman, and with the help of his father, the smith, he had forged two daggers into skates. Ever since, he had been practising in secret on a nearby pond that was frozen over. He was trying to make them fit better to his boots when Sergeant Rugg spotted him.

"In truth, me pippin," said the huge

sergeant, after the boy had explained to him what skates were for, " I would like to see this queer sport. Could you and your dad, the smith, make me a pair o' skates ? "

" Easily, Master Rugg," grinned Gipsy Joe, edging away, " if you can get a couple o' ploughshares big enough to make them with ! "

Just then four breathless soldiers came staggering through the snow into the camp.

" The rebels be out ! " panted one. " A full company of them, under Wat Tyler himself, made swift attack on us. They stole the sledge and horses when we were bringing along the stores."

Sergeant Rugg set off to a tent to get his mighty battle-axe.

" Give the alarm on your drum, Gipsy Joe ! " he boomed. " We must set out in search o' the thieving knaves. It was lucky, though, it was only sacks o' spuds that were being brought to the camp on the sledge."

Gipsy Joe beat his little drum, and the whole camp became instantly astir. But it was not until the boy king came running from the royal tent that the real loss was made known.

" We must ride out at once ! " he cried. " Under the sacks of potatoes on the sledge was a sack of gold sent from the Tower of London ! "

The news spread like wildfire. The gold was pay for the soldiers, and had been taken to a place called Chipstowe with other stores, and there put on to the sledge under a guard of soldiers. That money had to be got back before Wat

Suddenly there was a loud crack of breaking ice, and Gipsy Joe leaped clear as Wat Tyler and his band of rebels went splashing into the water.

Tyler used it to help his rebellion against young King Richard.

The boy king himself led his horsemen, with Gipsy Joe and Sergeant Rugg riding beside. Tracks were easy to follow at first, but a heavy snowfall soon covered them and the soldiers were forced to return to camp at dusk.

The next day the soldiers made another search, and after a brisk fight routed a band of rebels under Seth Murdock, one of Wat Tyler's captains. They got back the horses and sledge, but there was no sign of the missing money in any of the rebel tents.

Where was the king's gold? Wat Tyler himself had led the raiders, and now he had vanished. Where had he gone?

Many of the soldiers were tired out by the fighting, but the boy king was eager that scouts should go to find where Wat Tyler was hiding. When some of the men had gone, the boy king sent for Gipsy Joe and Sergeant Rugg.

"We, too, will go forth scouting, good comrades," he said. "Have horses harnessed to my sledge."

To dodge his captains and counsellors, the boy king had to pretend that he was only going to a nearby village. But once out of sight he turned away from the village and went on for several miles among the snow-clad hills. Presently, however, a wind got up and blew the snow in powder round them, so that they had to shelter in a wood for an hour or two.

"Well, methinks these rebel knaves must be somewhere near here," said the boy king, when the weather had cleared. "We will have a last scout round before going back to camp, good comrades."

"If you go up these hills, sire," said Gipsy Joe, "I will go the other way and skate across Duck Lake. We will cover a goodly stretch of country in less time that way."

"Off you go, then, Gipsy Joe," said the boy king. "Keep a sharp lookout for Wat Tyler, and meet us here an hour before sundown."

The boy king drove off with Sergeant Rugg, and Gipsy Joe tramped two or three miles through the snow until he came to Duck Lake, which was frozen hard. The wind had blown the powdery snow from the ice, and he put on his home-made skates and went skimming away.

A Ducking for the Rebels

Gipsy Joe laughed from sheer happiness. These wonderful new skates of his gave him the feeling as if he were a bird skimming just over the ice.

But, suddenly, as he approached the snowy bank, there was the sharp twang of bow-strings. Two arrows with a cord tied between them whizzed over the frozen surface of the lake. The cord caught Gipsy Joe round the ankles and sent him crashing down upon the ice!

Gipsy Joe skidded heavily on the frozen surface, shaken and dazed by the fall. A voice that he knew well rose on the frosty air in a howl of delight.

"That was a goodly shot and true!" cried the voice. "That has shaken the bones of the gipsy brat, I warrant!"

It was young Nick, the sneaky son of Seth Murdock, who shouted. He darted out from behind a tree, and two rebels, armed with bows, rose from behind snow-covered bushes. More rebels, led by Wat Tyler himself, came running from some tents that were hidden by a copse of young fir trees.

The first two men rushed upon the ice and seized little Gipsy Joe, whilst Nick Murdock danced safely in the rear and told them what to do.

"Smite him lustily with your fists, good men!" cried Nick. "Take care of him well, for he be a right slippery knave!"

Wat Tyler, Seth Murdock and the others surrounded the captured drummer-boy.

"'Tis tricky Gipsy Joe!" chuckled Wat Tyler. "What be these queer blades under your feet, with which you came a-running so strangely across the lake?"

Gipsy Joe breathed hard.

"They be skates, Master Tyler," he

Sergeant Rugg and the boy king tore down the slope on the sledge and crashed full into an old tree-trunk. Gipsy Joe ran towards them.

answered. " I made them at the smith's forge, after hearing wonderful tales of how the Dutch people use such things in winter-time."

" Humph ! We must see more of this wonder," grinned the rebel leader. " Now tell us, where be King Dick ? "

" I know not, Master Tyler," replied Gipsy Joe truthfully. " And besides, it might go ill with you again if you tried to find him. He has a mighty good bodyguard with him ! "

" Meaning that big chump Rugg ? " demanded Wat Tyler. " I promise that one day I'll crack his scurvy pate ! "

" You had best catch him asleep then," replied Gipsy Joe, " or else take with you fifty such knaves as these I see before me."

" Cheeky words, forsooth ! " yelled Nick Murdock. " Let us make a hole in the ice, Master Tyler, for methinks a cold bath would do him good ! "

" Aye, we will duck him later," Wat Tyler said. " Well I know this boy be obstinate in answering questions about his master, King Dick, but he shall be made to speak when we get him to the

camp. Tie his hands firmly behind him, for now I would see him use these strange things he calls skates."

" 'Twould be best, Master Tyler," grunted Seth Murdock, " if you set our two bowmen, one on either side of the lake, to shoot him if he tries to escape. Well I know this gipsy brat be slippery as an eel."

" Methinks you be a dunderhead, Master Murdock," smiled Joe. " All of you gather out there on the ice—roll logs to sit upon. The archers can be with you, and shoot more easily in any direction should I try to escape when I skate round about."

" 'Tis true ! " agreed Wat Tyler.

Two logs were rolled out on the lake, and the rebels seated themselves on them to watch Gipsy Joe on the new-fangled skates.

With hands behind him, little Gipsy Joe began skating round the rebels. He knew it was useless to shout, for the only friends likely to be within earshot were Sergeant Rugg and the boy king. In coming to his rescue, both of them might be captured, too.

But Gipsy Joe's lively brain thought of another plan. At first he began skating on one leg, then on the other, and sometimes turning backwards-way round.

" Watch me, masters ! " he piped. " Now I will skate mighty fast in a circle and without becoming dizzy."

He skated round and round the group of rebels, always keeping to the same tracks on the ice. Round and round he went, cutting deeper and deeper with his skates without Wat Tyler and the others noticing the trick he was playing.

" The gipsy brat skates well ! " exclaimed Tyler, " but me neck fair aches with twisting to watch him — H'm ! What's that ? "

Suddenly there was a loud crack of breaking ice, and Gipsy Joe leaped clear.

" We'll see who gets the cold bath now, Master Tyler ! " he yelled.

The rebels leaped up from the logs in alarm and the sudden movement completed the damage. The ice had broken away in a circle where Gipsy Joe's skates had weakened it, and the whole company of rebels went splashing down into the cold, shallow water !

Gipsy Joe skated for the nearest bank. Other shouts reached his ears and he saw the boy king and Sergeant Rugg on the sledge coming down the steep hillside. They had left the horses tethered to a tree and were racing to his rescue.

" Watch out ! " yelled Gipsy Joe.

The sergeant was lying on the sledge behind the boy king and steering with his big feet. But soon the sledge under their combined weight was streaking down the snowy slope, completely out of control ! Ahead of them loomed a hollow tree stump !

" Jump off ! " cried Gipsy Joe. " Jump for your lives ! "

But the boy king and the huge sergeant clung on. The sledge, with their full weight upon it, struck the tree stump, shattered the old wood to splinters and—amazingly !—sent a great shower of gold coins spinning into the air !

Quickly Gipsy Joe took off his skates and trudged through the snow to where Sergeant Rugg was squatting after somersaulting through space.

" Hurry, Master Rugg ! " he cried. " Pull yourself together ! Here be the king's gold ! The rebels must have hidden it in this hollow trunk and here they be coming to get it back again."

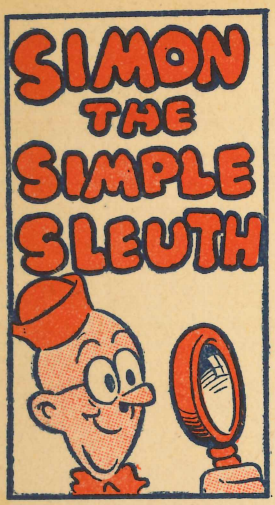
It was a lucky find. The three chums collected all the gold coins and stowed them in their pockets, for the small sack that they had been in had burst. Then, using all his mighty strength, Sergeant Rugg righted the sledge and dragged it up the hill towards the waiting horses.

As they rode away the boy king and little Gipsy Joe waved their hands to the half-frozen rebels spluttering and gasping as they cracked their way through the ice to the lake side.

" Toodle-oo, me masters ! " cried Gipsy Joe. " Methinks you will agree 'twas a rare exciting performance I gave on me fine new skates. However, you paid well to see it, so thanks for the bag o' gold ! "

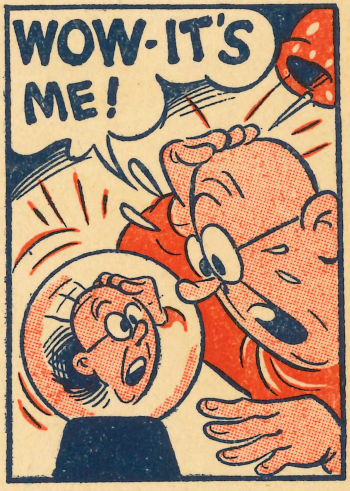
THE END

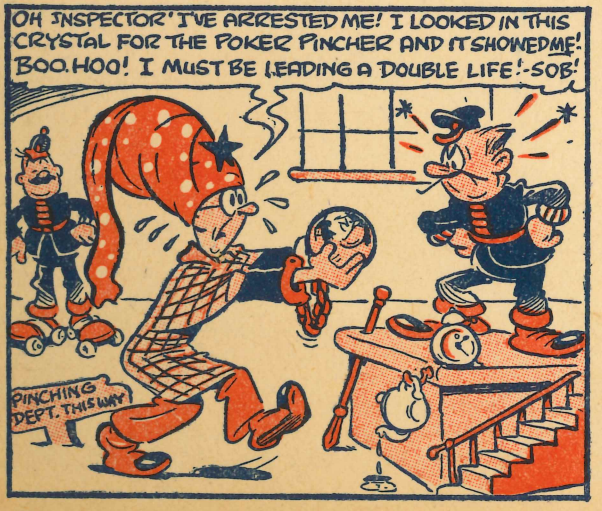
SIMON THE SIMPLE SLEUTH

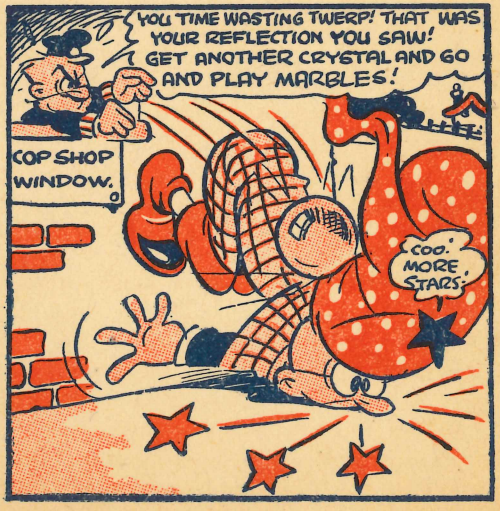


THUD!
TO THE INSPECTOR
I AM GOING TO PINCH THE LORD MAYOR'S GOLD POKER SOON! SO THERE! signed the Poker Pincher
HA HA
GET THAT MAN SIMON-GET THAT MAN!

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CRYSTAL-GAZING- ASK A QUESTION AND THE ANSWER WILL BE IN THE CRYSTAL!
ALLA WALLA HOKUS POKUS WHO IS THE MYSTERIOUS POKER PINCHER?



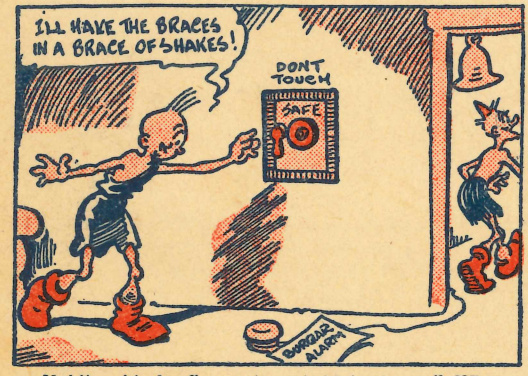

OH INSPECTOR! I'VE ARRESTED ME! I LOOKED IN THIS CRYSTAL FOR THE POKER PINCHER AND IT SHOWED ME! BOO HOO! I MUST BE LEADING A DOUBLE LIFE!-SOB!
PINCHING DEPT. THIS WAY!


YOU TIME WASTING TWERP! THAT WAS YOUR REFLECTION YOU SAW! GET ANOTHER CRYSTAL AND GO AND PLAY MARBLES!
COP SHOP WINDOW.
COO! MORE STARS!

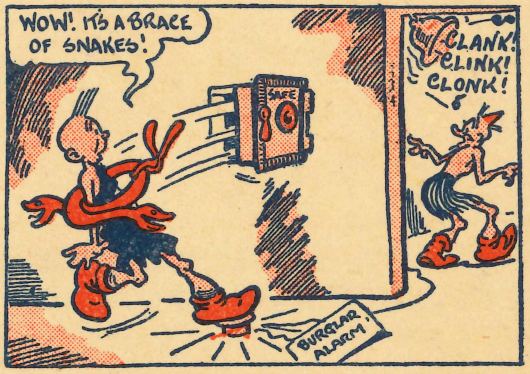
STONEHENGE KIT — THE ANCIENT BRIT.

1. Here we are again with our hero Stonehenge Kit. That was a bull-rusherus that was—and that woomph it gave Kit wafted him right through the wall. But seen from behind, that wall was only a bit of stage scenery.

2. Coo, Kit wasn't half chuckling now! Here he was right into Whizzy's secret cave. Slipping quietly along in his size sixes, our hero reached the end of the tunnel. There was Wicked Whizzy himself with the magic braces!



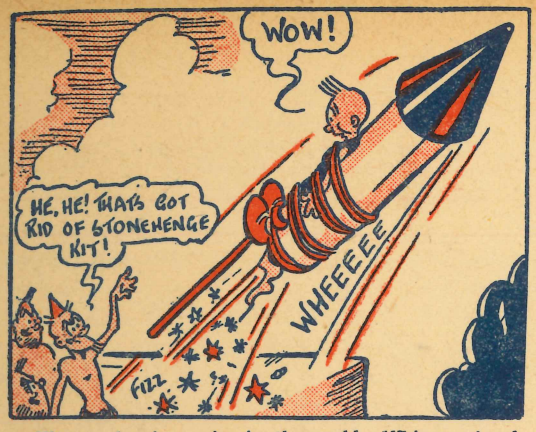
3. Holding his breff, our hero held back until Whizzy popped the magic braces into his safe. Then, when the wicked wizard had woozled away, Kit crept out to snaffle the magic trouser holder-uppers. Ssssh!



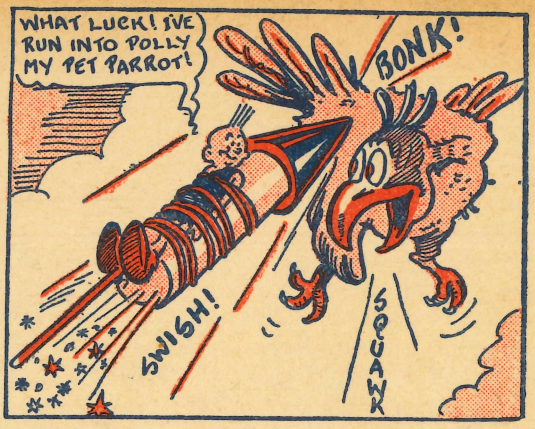
4. But these braces were magic ones, see? "Great snakes!" gasped Stonehenge Kit as he grabbed them, for the braces had suddenly changed into a snake. Kit was so surprised he stepped right on the burglar alarm.

5. Clank Clink! Clonk! How that bell pealed! It was different from an orange peel, but Whizzy came slipping back just the same. He was so pleased to have Kit in his power that he nearly blew his whiskers off.

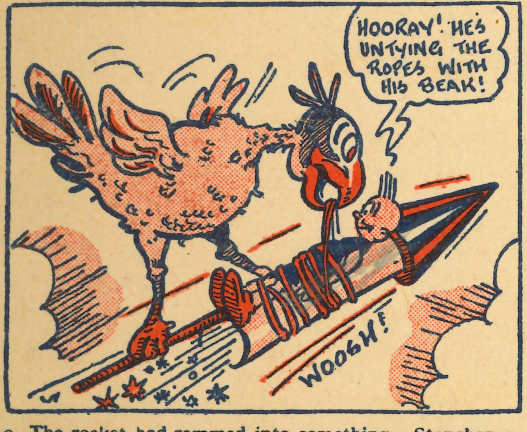
6. Then he called out his two left-hand men—the best he had in his Britbashers Boys' Club. Kit couldn't escape, and he was prodded with a pitch-fork up to the top of Whizzy's castle. There he was tied to a rocket.



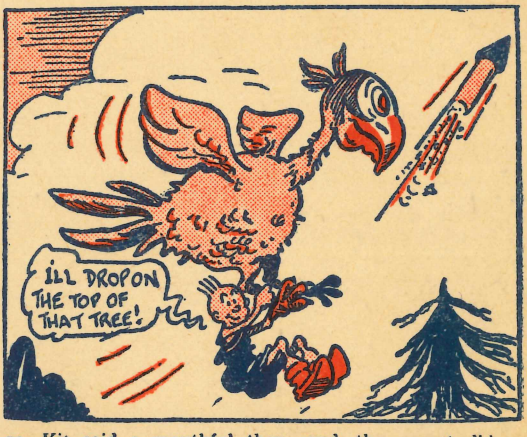
7. Kit was due for a rise in the world. Whizzy refused to set him loose, and lit the fuse of the rocket instead. Swoooosh! What a racket that rocket made as it shot up—UP—UP into the air with Stonehenge Kit tied to it.



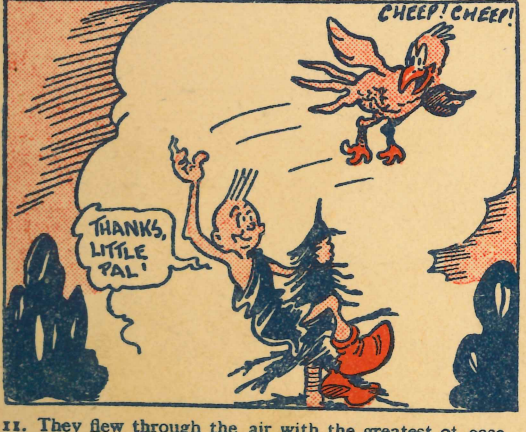
8. Gosh, our hero didn't half groan as he lay there and saw the sparks shoot out. He groaned again when he thought of how many extra stars he'd see when that rocket landed. Then—bonk!—squawk!—what was that?



9. The rocket had rammed into something. Stonehenge Kit chuckled—it was his pet parrot on its way home from night school where it was learning to speak. Kit told it to climb on to the rocket pole and help him.



10. Kit said a mouthful then—and the parrot did a mouthful. It pecked away at the ropes and soon Kit was out of his peck of trouble in an unexpected way. Then Kit parked himself on Polly and let the rocket go.



11. They flew through the air with the greatest of ease, with our hero hanging from below Polly's knees. Then Kit spotted a lonesome pine and decided that it wouldn't be lonesome any more. Our brave hero dropped in on it.

12. You see, chums, first it was snakes and now it was ladders. But when Kit got farther down that pine, he pined to get back up again. He'd landed into some more trouble, so see what happens to him on page 90.

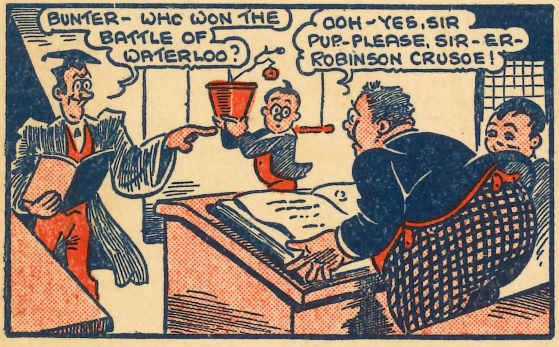
BILLY BUNTER

THE FATTEST SCHOOLBOY ON EARTH

COO! FANCY THAT! I WISH I COULD RUN AWAY TO SEA!
(COMO) SO ROBINSON CRUSOE RAN AWAY TO SEA AND CAME HOME WITH A FORTUNE OF GOLD AND JEWELS!

1. Billy Bunter was fed-up—that meant he was wanting to feed his fat face as usual. His class was having a history lesson, but Billy didn't like dates—unless they were the kind of dates that you eat!

2. To pass the time away until tea-time, Billy read a book about Robinson Crusoe. Suddenly, Bunter blinked at the bit about Crusoe carting home a load of gold and jewels. Coo, you could buy a lot of grub with that!

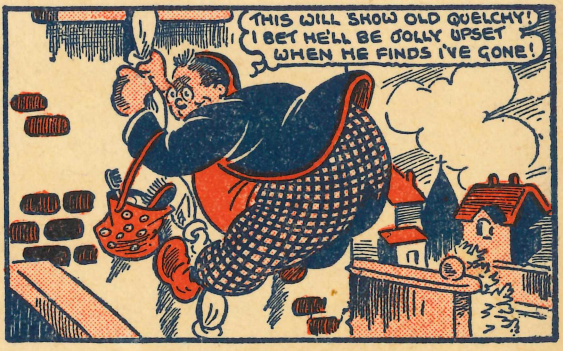


3. But somebody else besides Billy was blinking! Mr. Quelch, the master, was amazed to see the fat lad so interested. To try Billy out, he asked him who won the Battle of Waterloo —and caught the fat lad completely out!

HOW COULD YOU BE SO FOOLISH! YOU WILL STAY IN AFTER LESSONS AND COPY OUT TWO HUNDRED PAGES FROM YOUR HISTORY BOOK!
CRUMBS! MEAN BEAST!

4. The only Waterloo Billy had heard of was the station in London, so the silly buffer began babbling. But whether it was the battle or the station, Billy Bunter was on the wrong line with his answer.

5. So the Battle of Waterloo landed Bunter in the wars with Quelchy. When the master found the book about Robinson Crusoe, he grew so angry that he made Bunter stay behind and copy out two hundred pages of history.

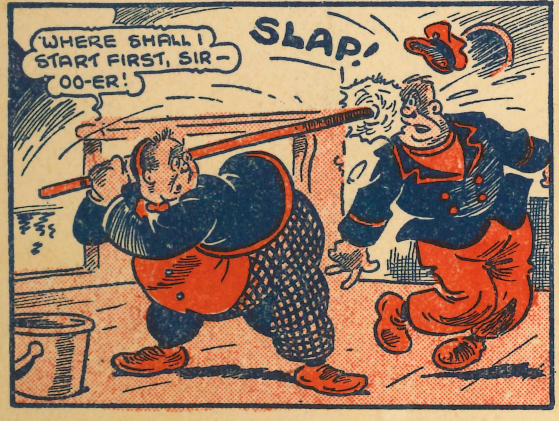


6. Hunger and writing that historical stuff nearly drove Billy Bunter hysterical. By the time he'd got to his fiftieth blot he was starving. There was only one way he could see— he'd run off to sea like Robinson Crusoe!

7. Billy didn't stop to think seriously about this sea business. He fairly bounced along the road towards the docks and the bounding main. "Tee-hee!" he tittered. "This life on the briny is a brainy wheeze. That mean beast Quelchy won't half be mad when I've made my fortune!" But before that fortune could be made, Billy Bunter had to find a ship. After an hour's toddle Billy arrived at Splashton Docks. He made for the first boat he saw.

8. Sam Seadogge was the skipper, and his ship was a barque—but Bunter was barking up the wrong tree if he thought he was in for an easy time. Sam Seadogge had one of those sorts of faces that make you seasick to look at!

9. Billy saluted and asked for a job. Sam growled and told him to swab the deck—that meant to mop it. Billy chortled—he was good at mopping up grub, and he thought this would be just as easy. But Billy was in for a surprise.

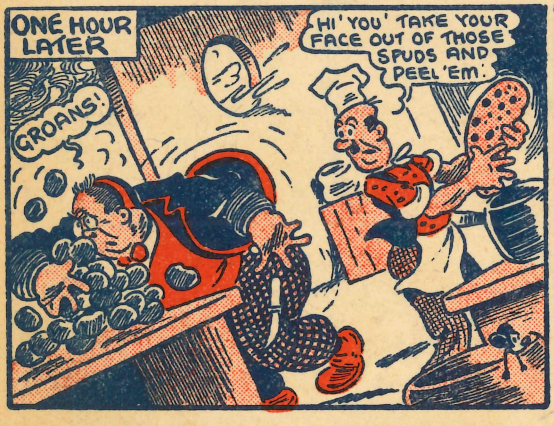


10. "Oh, a life on the ocean wave!" he warbled, waving his mop over his shoulder. "Oh—oh, corks! What's happened?" As Billy sang, there came a sort of sloshing noise behind him—he'd copped his skipper with the mop!

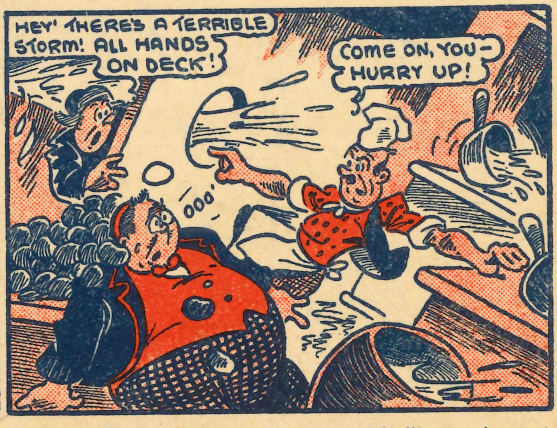
11. Skipper Seadogge was furious as the mop sloshed across his fizzog. Bunter had put plenty of beef into it, to let Sam see he was willing, but he'd caught his skipper's eye in a way that made him wild instead.

12. Down below to the kitchen Bunter was sent. He didn't mind peeling spuds—anything to do with grub appealed to him. There was also a chance of snaffling a free snack for himself down there as well.

13. There was a pile of spuds waiting to be peeled, but Billy Bunter looked around to see if he could get a roll-and-butter to keep his strength up. He got the roll all right—the ship had started to sail.

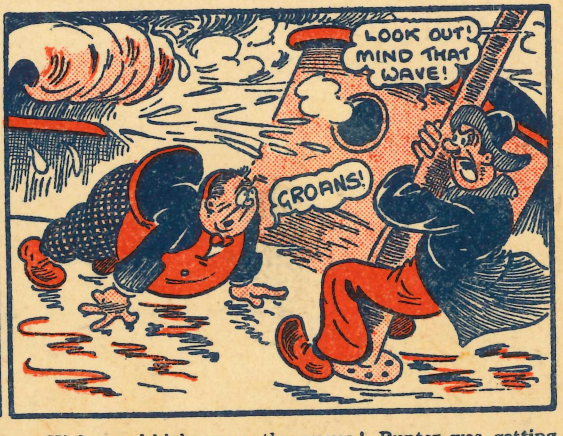


14. Like the boy on the burning deck, Billy had begun to think himself a hot kid. But this rolling spoiled everything. Up and down—up and down! He tried to peel the spuds but the ship just wouldn't let him.



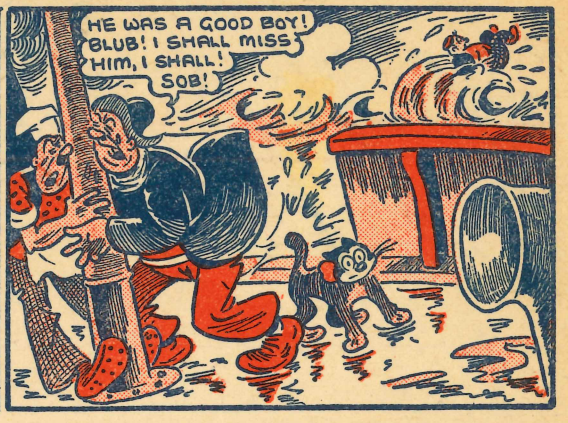
15. After an hour had passed, Bunter felt like passing out. Gosh, he'd never been so sick in all his life. His fat face had turned green, and all he wanted to do was to go home. Then came the storm—and what a storm!

16. But you can't get off a ship and walk home. Billy staggered up on deck, had one dekko at the waves, then hung on for dear life. He didn't want to be a sailor any more—they could keep their rotten fortunes!

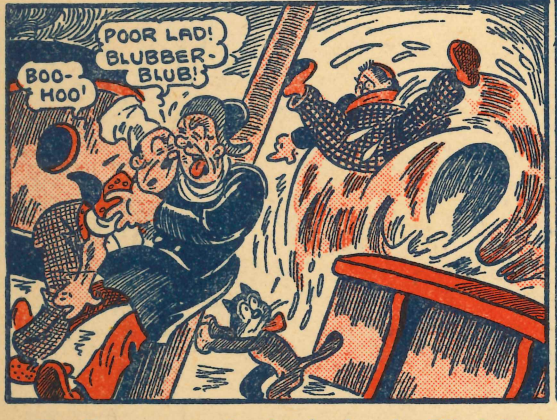


17. Higher and higher rose the waves! Bunter was getting wobblier and wobblier at the knees. Skipper Sam Seadogge, holding fast to a mast, spotted him and called him over. Billy was so wet he waded across.

18. This life on the ocean wave was a wash-out! Suddenly a wave walloped Bunter from the back and washed him overboard. It was the first time he had been washed behind the ears since Quelchy had made him do it.



19. Away went Bunter bounding over the ocean without a notion where he was going. It looked like "Good-bye, Billy!" Cookie cried and Skipper Sam wept—so much that they wetted their feet worse than ever.



20. But Bunter was so fat that he floated. Billy bobbed along until he met another wave going back. Woomph! The waves weren't half playing pitch and toss—this one tossed our fat hero right back to the ship.

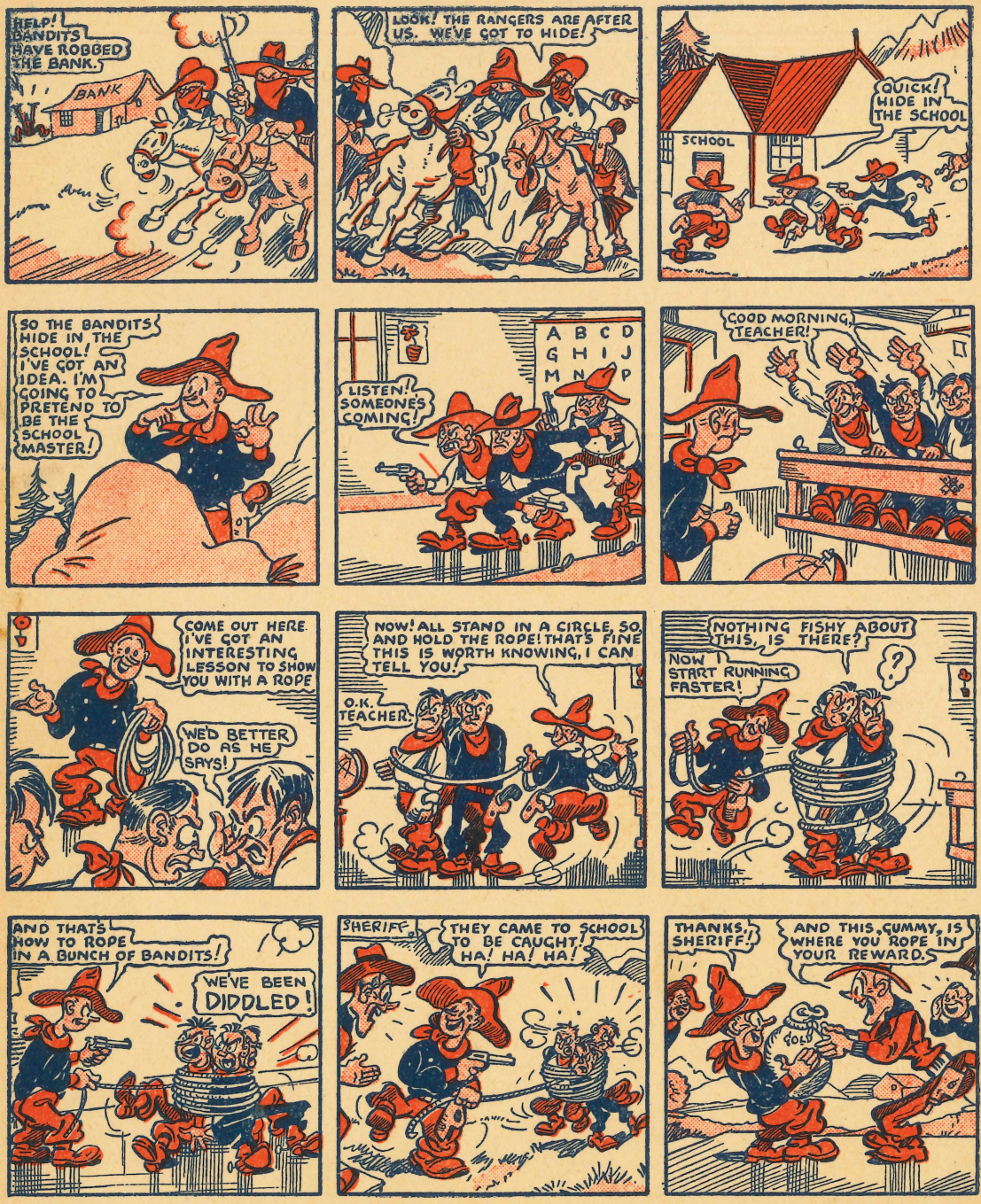
21. Clump! Clop! Cookie and Skipper Sam suddenly wondered what was happening. It was only Bunter coming back and landing feet first! One boot copped Cookie on the listener, while Sam got the other in the neck.

22. And Billy Bunter got it in the neck from both of them. Skipper Sam called two of his crew, so that was the end of Billy as Robinson Crusoe. Billy was clapped into irons, but there was nothing to clap about.

IS THIS YOURS? WELL TAKE IT AWAY AND NEVER LET ME SEE IT AGAIN! OH CORKS! HOW DARE YOU GO OUT FOR A JOLLY BAIL WHEN YOU HAVE NOT COMPLETED YOUR LESSONS—I SHALL CANE YOU SEVERELY!

23. Quelchy was waiting for Bunter when the ship got back. And when Quelchy was through with him, poor old Billy Bunter felt as though he'd been through the battle of Waterloo and a shipwreck, too!

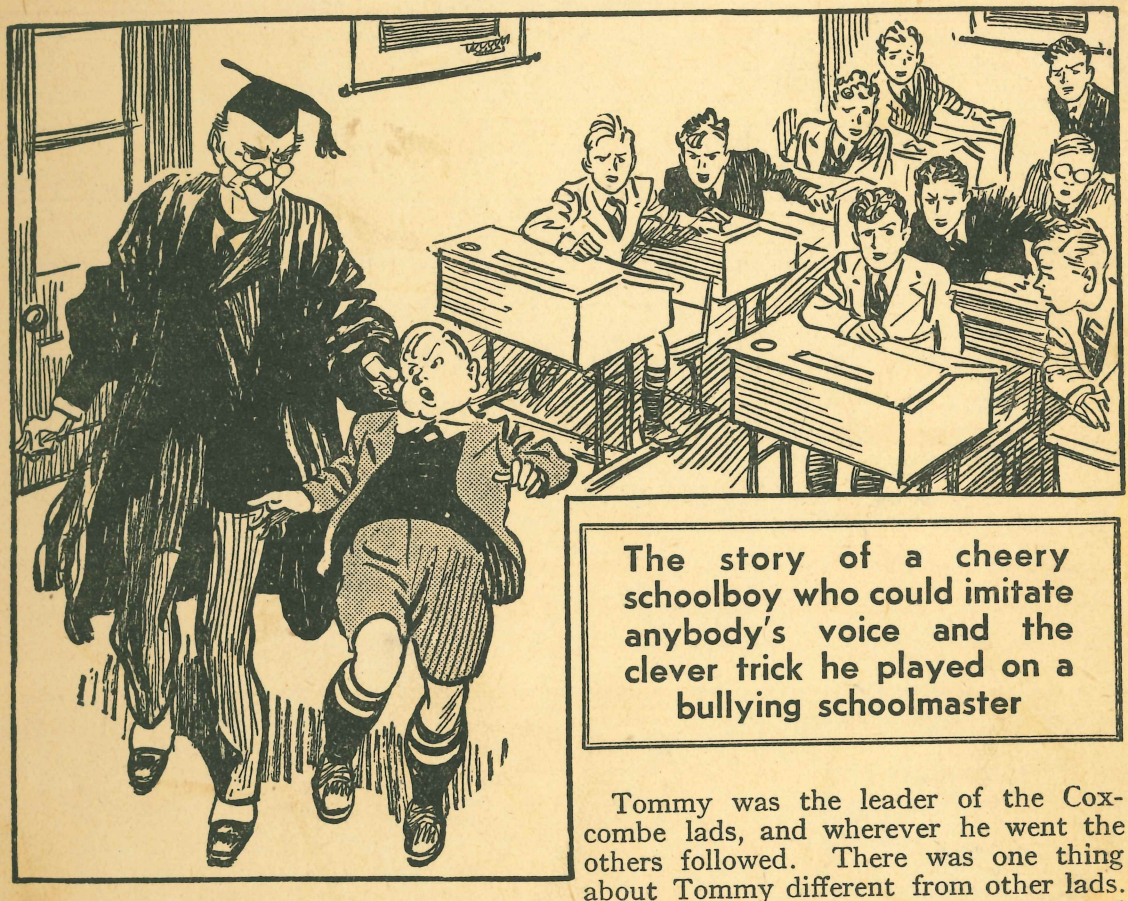
GUMMY . . . THE GUY WHO STICKS TO HIS JOB!


HELP! BANDITS HAVE ROBBED THE BANK.
BANK
LOOK! THE RANGERS ARE AFTER US. WE'VE GOT TO HIDE!
QUICK! HIDE IN THE SCHOOL
SCHOOL
SO THE BANDITS HIDE IN THE SCHOOL! I'VE GOT AN IDEA. I'M GOING TO PRETEND TO BE THE SCHOOL MASTER!
LISTEN! SOMEONES COMING!
A B C D
G H I J
M N P
GOOD MORNING, TEACHER!
COME OUT HERE. I'VE GOT AN INTERESTING LESSON TO SHOW YOU WITH A ROPE
WE'D BETTER DO AS HE SAYS!
NOW! ALL STAND IN A CIRCLE, SO AND HOLD THE ROPE! THAT'S FINE THIS IS WORTH KNOWING, I CAN TELL YOU!
O.K. TEACHER.
NOTHING FISHY ABOUT THIS, IS THERE?
NOW START RUNNING FASTER!
?
AND THAT'S HOW TO ROPE IN A BUNCH OF BANDITS!
WE'VE BEEN DIDDLED!
SHERIFF.
THEY CAME TO SCHOOL TO BE CAUGHT! HA! HA! HA!
THANKS, SHERIFF!
AND THIS, GUMMY, IS WHERE YOU ROPE IN YOUR REWARD.
GOLD

Three bandits bold, out for a prank,
Rode into town and held up the bank.
But Gummy the Ranger, a very bright kid,
Followed them into the school where they'd hid.

Then Gummy showed them some real fancy tricks,
And soon roped 'em up—they *were* in a fix!
So the Sheriff took charge of three bandits bold,
While Gummy took charge of a big bag of gold!

CHEERY TOMMY TUCKER



The story of a cheery schoolboy who could imitate anybody's voice and the clever trick he played on a bullying schoolmaster

Monday Morning With Mr. Trigg!

NOBODY liked Mr. Horace Trigg. He was the master who taught the village boys at Coxcombe School.

Mr. Trigg was a tall, lanky man, with a severe-looking face. He was always irritable, and bad-tempered, too. He disliked boys, but no more than they disliked him.

Of all the boys in his class the one he disliked most was Tommy Tucker. Tommy was a bright lad, always full of fun and mischief, although he meant no harm. Mr. Trigg was so bad-tempered himself he simply hated to see anybody happy.

Tommy was the leader of the Coxcombe lads, and wherever he went the others followed. There was one thing about Tommy different from other lads. He could imitate anybody's voice and make it appear to come from anywhere. Tommy and his pals used to get a lot of fun out of this.

It was Monday morning, and the village boys were in their classroom waiting for the first lesson to begin. Mr. Trigg had just come in and was standing at his desk glaring at them over his steel-rimmed spectacles.

Mr. Trigg was always irritable and nasty, but on Mondays he was even worse. So the village lads waited nervously for something to happen. Something was bound to be wrong when old Trigg glared at them like that. Nobody could remember having done anything

wrong—they were always careful about that on Monday mornings.

While they had been waiting for Mr. Trigg to come into the classroom, Fatty Trimble, Tommy's chum, had put three bulls'-eyes into his mouth. He was afraid to take them out now in case old Trigg spotted him. Mr. Trigg's gimlet eyes suddenly fixed on Fatty's bulging cheeks, and Fatty felt a cold shiver trickle down his spine.

" Trimble ! " Mr. Trigg's voice sounded like the crack of a whip. " Trimble, what have you in your mouth ? "

" Mmmmm—gug gug——" Fatty gurgled, frantically trying to get rid of the bulls'-eyes.

Mr. Trigg's face went a deep red. It didn't take much to make him angry. Nobody wanted to be in Fatty's shoes at that moment.

" Boy, how dare you fill your mouth with those horrible things ? " Mr. Trigg barked. " I've never come across such greediness in all my life."

Just then Fatty managed to get rid of the bulls'-eyes. He looked uneasily at the angry Mr. Trigg.

" P-p-please, sir, I'm very sorry," he said meekly. Fatty looked very innocent, but that didn't affect Mr. Trigg one bit.

" Stand out before the class," he snorted. " I'm going to make an example of you."

" O lor' ! " Fatty groaned under his breath. He marched out to the front of the class, followed by Mr. Trigg. The other boys in the class were looking very solemn and uneasy.

" Bend down and touch your toes," Mr. Trigg commanded, and poor Fatty had to obey.

Mr. Trigg laid on six of the best—and he knew how to lay it on all right. Fatty was a plucky chap, but he had to bite his lips to keep back a yell of pain. He went back to his place feeling as if he had been dragged through a hedge.

But Mr. Trigg hadn't finished yet. He glared around the class.

" I am determined to stop this greedy habit of over-eating," he raved. " I'm certain that all you boys are over-feeding yourselves. Now I'm going to look in your desks, and woe betide anyone who has any messy sweets there, or anything like that."

A groan went round the class, for only that morning all of them had smuggled bags of jam tarts and bottles of ginger beer into the classroom. That afternoon was a half-holiday, and the boys had planned to have a tip-top feed in the gardener's toolshed as soon as lessons were over.

They had been looking forward to that feed, but it seemed very much now as if those good things were going to vanish.

Mr. Trigg lifted the lid of the first desk, and his mean little eyes almost popped out of his head when he saw a huge bag of jam tarts and a bottle of ginger beer inside. The desk was Tommy Tucker's. He looked bravely up into Mr. Trigg's face without blinking an eye.

Mr. Trigg didn't say a word, but took the tarts and ginger beer and placed them on his own desk. Then he went round all the other desks, and in each one he found jam tarts, or doughnuts, and bottles of ginger beer. He took them all, and soon his desk looked like a tuck shop.

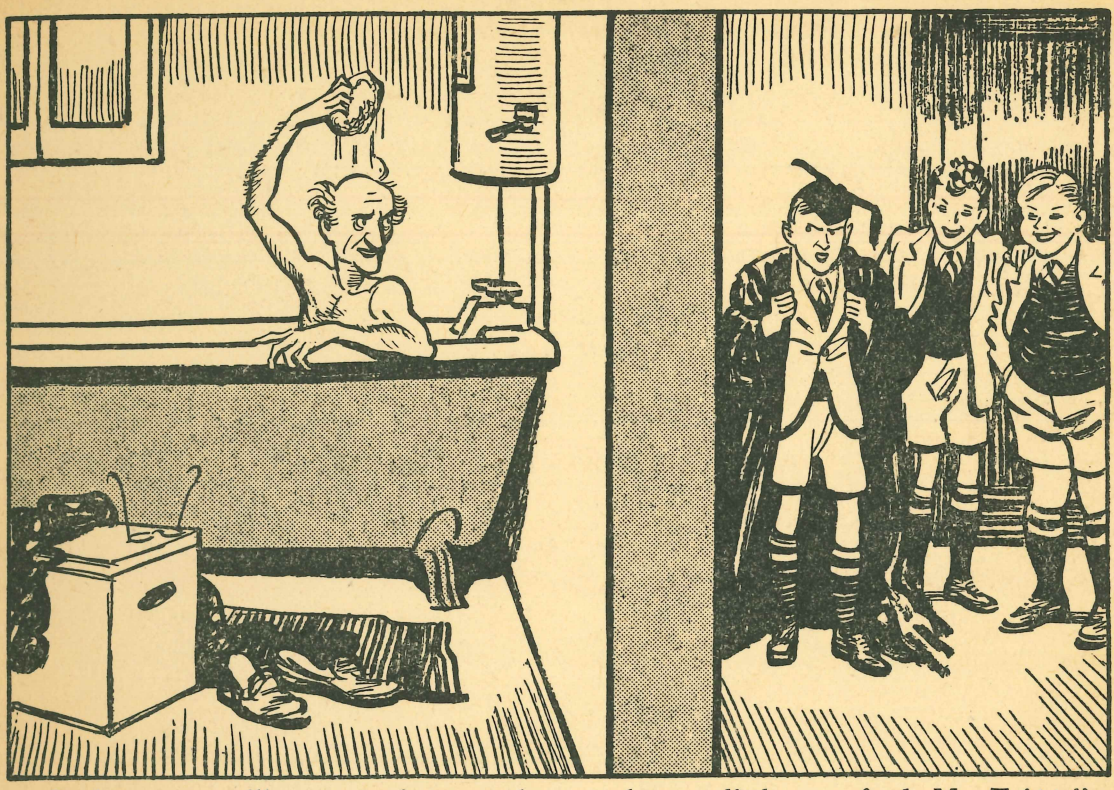
Then he turned to the class, a nasty little smile on his lips.

" So this is what you've been doing, eh ? " he said in his nastiest voice. " Well, I'm going to take charge of all this—er—messy stuff. I've never come across such greediness in all my life. I shall see that these horrid—um—eatables are put elsewhere. We will now proceed with the lesson."

" If you please, sir, we weren't going to eat them in the classroom," Johnny Brian, Tommy's other chum, blurted out. " We only had them in, ready for this afternoon."

" Silence ! " Mr. Trigg snapped. " Another word and I shall cane you most severely," and Johnny groaned under his breath.

It was a very dreary morning for the lads. Mr. Trigg was never a pleasant gentleman, but that morning he was worse than ever. Nothing that the boys did was right. and the cane worked



"Perhaps you will arrange for your boys to have a little—er—feed, Mr. Trigg," said Tommy Tucker. Johnny and Tubby grinned, for it was the voice of Mr. Weedle, their Headmaster, that spoke.

overtime. Never were the village lads more relieved to see the end of lessons.

Tommy Gets His Own Back.

For a long time after the rest of the boys had gone home, Tommy Tucker and his two pals hung around the school yard. Tommy Tucker, Johnny Brian, and Fatty Trimble were inseparable pals. They were always together. They were not feeling too cheerful over the loss of their tarts, for they had brought in more than the others and were looking forward to a good feed.

The rest of the lads had gone home, feeling that it was useless to worry any more about it, but Tommy and his pals were hanging around just in case there might be a chance to get their tuck back.

" It's too bad, you fellows," Tommy said, and there was a frown on his usually happy face. " Old Trigg is jolly mean, I reckon. Just like him, though, to do something like that. It wasn't as though we were eating the stuff. It's just his mean, crabby way, that's all."

" I bet he'll have a jolly good feed all on his own," Johnny Brian replied.

" And with our tuck, too," Fatty Trimble groaned. " Gosh, I could almost cry, having to lose those jam tarts and doughnuts."

Tommy and Johnny grinned. Fatty Trimble just loved eating, and they knew he must be feeling more miserable than anybody else.

Through the open school door they could see the staircase, in the hall, that led to the upper floors. Just then Mr. Trigg came into view, going up the stairs. He had a towel over his arm.

" Look at him," Fatty grunted. " He's going up to have a bath now. I'll bet

he's been having a good tuck-in with our tarts and ginger beer."

Fatty and Johnny went on talking, but Tommy was silent. He was thinking. He had suddenly remembered that the masters were having a party that afternoon in the hall. Some very important school people were coming, and the headmaster, Mr. Weedle, was giving a party.

A grin spread over Tommy's face as he turned to his pals.

" Listen, you chaps," he said in a low voice. " I've got an idea for teaching old Trigg a lesson."

" It's time someone thought about something," Fatty Trimble moaned. " I'm hungry, and it gives me a pain in the tummy when I think of those tarts and doughnuts we lost this morning."

" What's the wheeze, Tommy ? " Johnny Brian asked eagerly.

" Just leave it all to me," Tommy replied. " You chaps follow me up to the bathroom. We're going to have some fun with old Trigg, and if I'm not mistaken we'll have a free feed to make up for what we lost."

There were a good many chuckles as Tommy Tucker and his two pals stole quietly into the hall and up the stairs. There was no one about.

Mr. Weedle had gone across to his house near the school, and the other masters had gone out somewhere too. Only Mr. Trigg remained, and he was left to get things ready for the party.

As the three lads crept up to the bathroom door, they could hear the sound of splashing water.

Mr. Trigg had hung his cap and gown up outside the bathroom door, and grinning at his pals Tommy took them down and put them on.

Tommy winked at his chums, then he cleared his throat. They all grinned, for they knew what was coming. Suddenly a deep, musical voice sounded in the passage. If Tommy's pals hadn't known what was coming they would have sworn that it was the voice of Mr. Weedle, their headmaster.

" Er—Mr. Trigg——"

The splashing of water stopped like magic, and the lads heard a startled gasp from inside the bathroom.

" Oh—yes, sir. Is that you, Mr. Weedle ? " Mr. Trigg asked. He seemed to be very flustered. " I'm so sorry, sir. I was just taking a bath before the party."

" Ahem—quite so, Mr. Trigg, quite so," came Tommy Tucker's voice, imitating the Head's.

" Did you wish to speak to me, sir ? " Mr. Trigg went on. " I'll hurry out of the bath, at once."

" Not at all, Trigg—not at all." Tommy went on. " Take your time. Is everything ready for the party this afternoon? "

" Yes, sir," came Trigg's voice from the bathroom. Tommy's pals grinned. Old Trigg's voice sounded like honey when he thought he was speaking to the Head. " Everything is ready, sir," he went on eagerly. " The table is laid in the hall, and it only remains for the guests to arrive."

" Good—very good, Trigg," Tommy replied in the Head's voice. " Have we got in plenty of refreshments ? "

" Oh yes, sir, ample supplies of everything—in fact more than enough." replied Mr. Trigg.

" Excellent, my dear Trigg. Now listen. I think we'll give the boys of your class a treat this afternoon."

" Eh ? What did you say, sir ? " There was a sharp note in Mr. Trigg's voice.

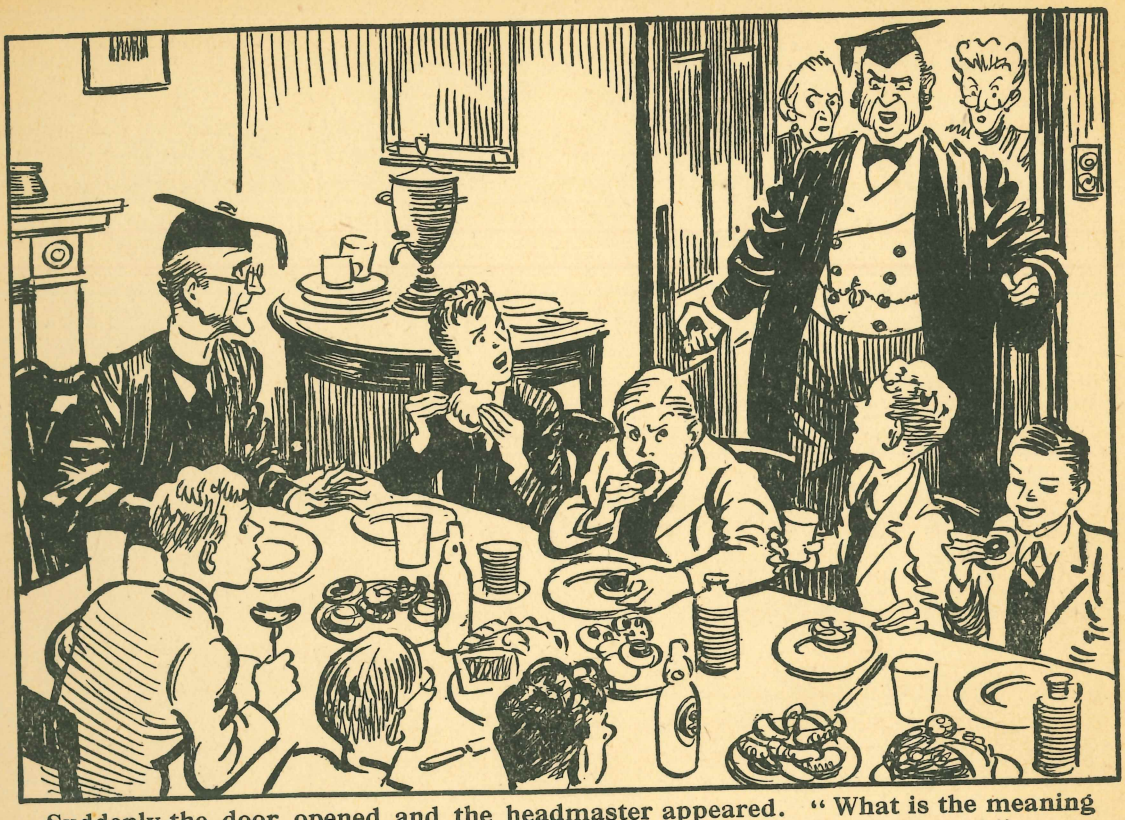
" I said we'll give your boys a treat this afternoon," repeated Tommy. " As we have more than enough they shall have a treat too. Perhaps you will arrange for them to have a little—er—um—spread. You can lay another table in the hall."

There came a gurgling sound from inside the bathroom. That was Mr. Trigg trying to speak.

" But, sir——" he gasped at last. " Surely you don't mean that ? "

" Of course I mean it," Tommy replied, making the Head's voice sound snappy. He did it well, too.

" But, sir, this—this is ridiculous. A party to those greedy young boys ? "



Suddenly the door opened and the headmaster appeared. " What is the meaning of this, Trigg ? " he thundered. " What are these boys doing here ? "

" I feel generous to-day, Trigg," Tommy went on. " In any case, it isn't for you to argue with me. When you have finished your bath you will find some of the lads in the school yard playing football."

" Very well, sir—certainly, sir," Mr. Trigg gasped. " I'll do as you say, of course, sir."

" Very good, Mr. Trigg."

The next moment, Tommy Tucker and his two pals heard the furious splashing of water as Mr. Trigg continued his bath, and they sped quickly down to the yard to play football.

Ten minutes later Mr. Trigg appeared on the steps. Tommy and his pals were playing football and pretended not to notice him. By and by Mr. Trigg walked down the yard to the place where they were playing.

" Tucker ! " Mr. Trigg's voice was still as unpleasant as ever. The boys stopped playing at once and looked innocently at their master.

" Yes, sir," Tommy replied in a very respectful voice.

For some moments Mr. Trigg did not say another word. They could see by his face that he wasn't feeling at all happy at what he had to say. At last he spoke.

" Mr. Weedle has decided that you boys can have a—er—small party in the hall," he said. " You certainly don't deserve it, and if I had my way you wouldn't get it either, but as the Head has said so it can't be helped. Why he should suddenly want to encourage you in your greedy habits is more than I can understand. You had better go and find the rest of the boys and proceed to the hall. Bah ! I have no patience with such greediness in boys." And the unhappy Trigg strode back to the school building.

It didn't take Tommy and his two pals long to find the others. When Tommy

told them why they had to go back to the school they could hardly believe him.

" You're pulling our legs," Dicky Bell said. " The Head is the wrong sort to give away free feeds, and especially old Trigg."

At last Tommy convinced them that he was serious, though he didn't tell them of his wheeze, and how he had completely fooled Mr. Trigg. The fewer who knew about that the better.

" Oh boy—let's go to it," another of them said, and before you could say Jack Robinson they were all back at the school and in the hall.

Their mouths watered at the sight of the good things to eat. Mr. Trigg was there, and he looked even more sour and unhappy than before.

" You can begin," he snapped, as soon as they had sat down, " but if I had my way I'd give you lessons to do instead of gorging."

Nobody took any more notice of Mr. Trigg, but they started to pile into the eatables.

" Mmmmmmm-mum," Fatty Trimble gurgled, with his mouth full of ham and pickles. " This is O.K., you chaps. I can hardly believe it's true, even now."

" Don't talk so much, Fatty, then you can eat more," Tommy Tucker replied with a grin. Fatty took Tommy's advice and set to work in earnest. When Fatty Trimble really got going he could eat at least four times as much as anybody else.

For the next half-hour nothing could be heard except the sound of champing jaws. Then, just when Fatty Trimble heaved a satisfied sigh, the sound of voices was heard outside.

The next moment the door opened and Mr. Weedle appeared, followed by half a dozen important-looking ladies and gentlemen.

Mr. Weedle's eyes opened wide in astonishment at the sight of twenty lads sitting at a table and just finishing a jolly good meal. He turned to Mr. Trigg, who was beginning to see that there was something wrong.

" What is the meaning of this, Trigg ? " he thundered. " What are these boys doing here ? "

Mr. Trigg's face looked comical.

" But, sir, it was your orders," he gasped. " You told me to give the boys of my class a party. Don't you remember coming to the bathroom door when I was having my bath ? "

" What nonsense is this ? " Mr. Weedle stormed. " Are you mad, Trigg ? Have you taken leave of your senses ? The very idea of allowing these boys to have a party in this room. Disgusting I call it. Is this part of the food that I provided for our own party ? "

" Y-yes, sir," Mr. Trigg replied, looking quite scared and bewildered ; " but you told me——"

" You foolish man," Mr. Weedle stormed. " You must be dreaming. I haven't been near the school all the afternoon. I'm surprised at you, taking part in a schoolboy party—and at your age, too. And what is more, you are going to pay for all the food they have eaten." He turned to Tommy and his pals. " You boys, leave here at once."

Tommy Tucker and Co. were only too glad to go. They saw the stern faces of the visitors and the masters, and above all, old Trigg's unhappy, miserable look. Out in the yard Tommy chuckled.

" Poor old Trigg," he whispered to Johnny and Fatty. " He's got a nice little bill to pay. But it serves him right for being so jolly mean about our tuck. Well, anyway, we've had it all back, and more besides "—and, still chuckling, the chums hurried arm-in-arm from the school yard.

. . . . . .

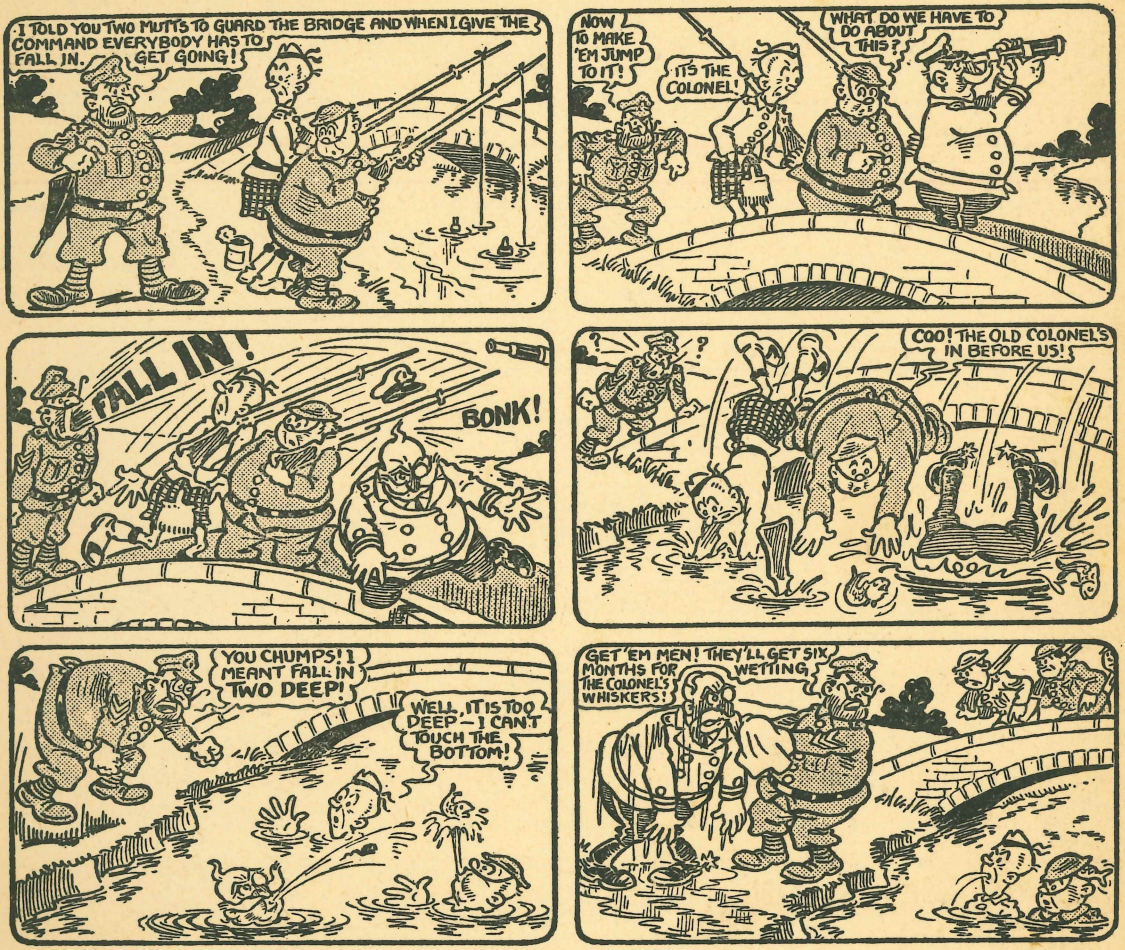
It was a different Mr. Trigg who rustled into the classroom the next morning.

Evidently Mr. Weedle suspected that Mr. Trigg had been the victim of a practical joke and had told that bad-tempered gentleman that in future he was to treat his boys a little better.

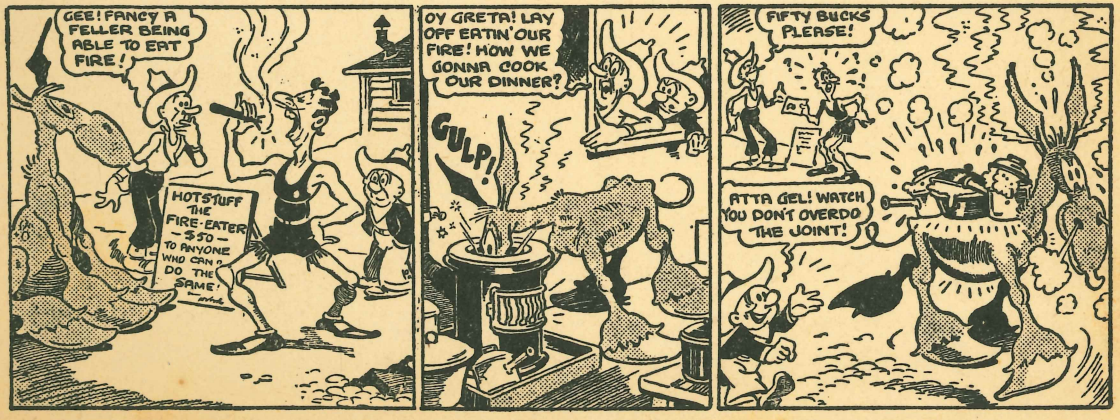
And although it certainly didn't agree with Mr. Trigg, from that day he was much kinder to Cheery Tommy Tucker and the rest of the boys.

THE END

SANDY AND MUDDY - - - THE TWO TERRORS OF THE TERRIERS

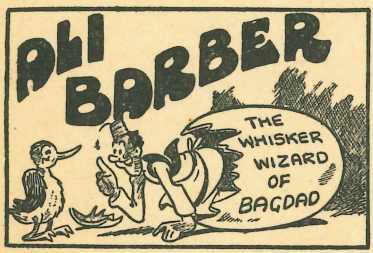

I TOLD YOU TWO MUTTS TO GUARD THE BRIDGE AND WHEN I GIVE THE COMMAND EVERYBODY HAS TO FALL IN. GET GOING!
NOW TO MAKE 'EM JUMP TO IT!
IT'S THE COLONEL!
WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO ABOUT THIS?
FALL IN!
BONK!
COO! THE OLD COLONEL'S IN BEFORE US!
YOU CHUMPS! I MEANT FALL IN TWO DEEP!
WELL, IT IS TOO DEEP — I CAN'T TOUCH THE BOTTOM!
GET 'EM MEN! THEY'LL GET SIX MONTHS FOR THE COLONEL'S WHISKERS!
WETTING

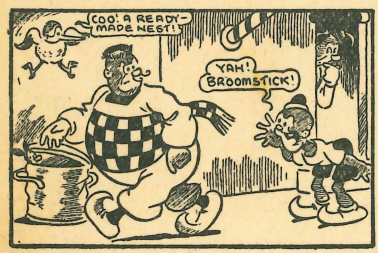
MIKE, SPIKE AND GRETA - - - THE FIRE-HEATER!

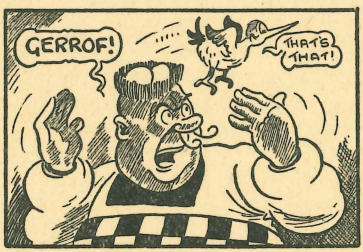

GEE! FANCY A FELLER BEING ABLE TO EAT FIRE!
HOTSTUFF THE FIRE-EATER —$50— TO ANYONE WHO CAN DO THE SAME!
OY GRETA! LAY OFF EATIN' OUR FIRE! HOW WE GONNA COOK OUR DINNER?
GULP!
FIFTY BUCKS PLEASE!
ATTA GEL! WATCH YOU DON'T OVERDO THE JOINT!

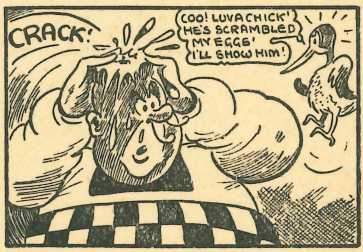
CHESTNUT CORNER

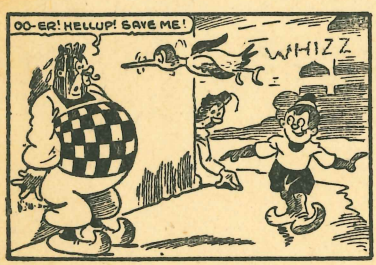
JUST A FEW OF THE STRIPS THAT HAVE MADE THE "KNOCK-OUT" COMIC FAMOUS

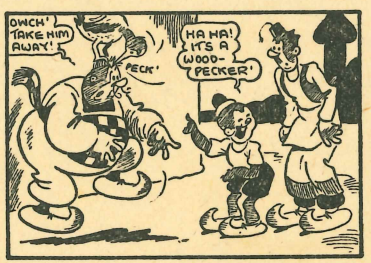


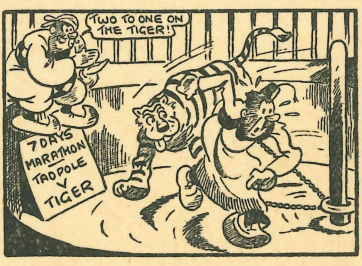




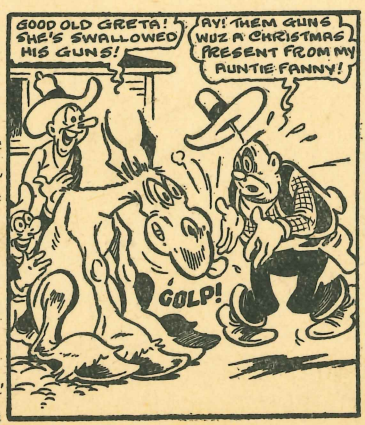


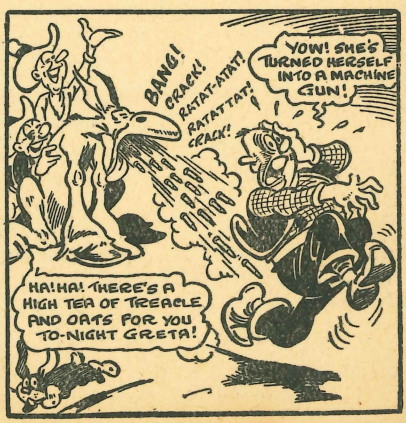


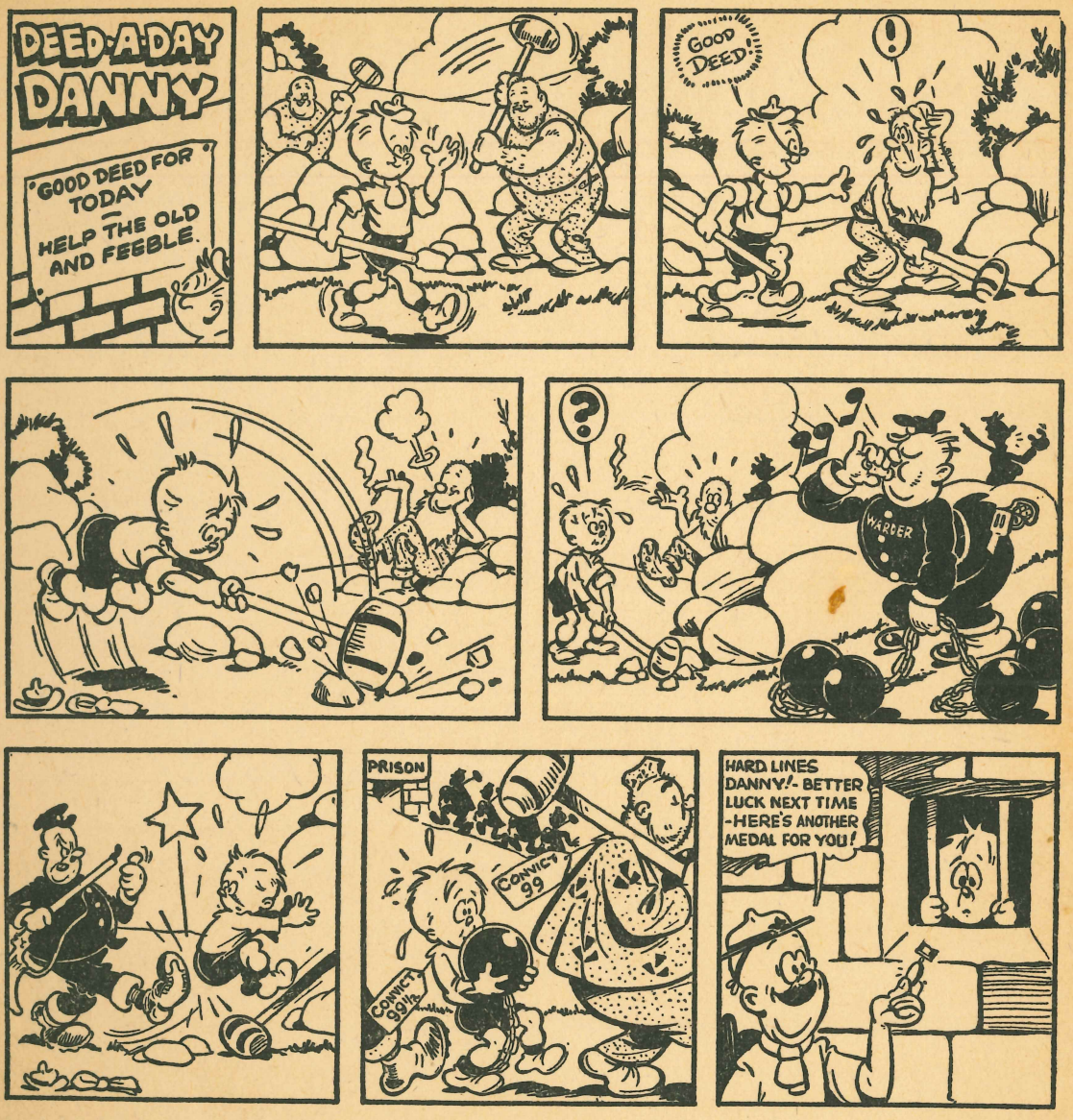




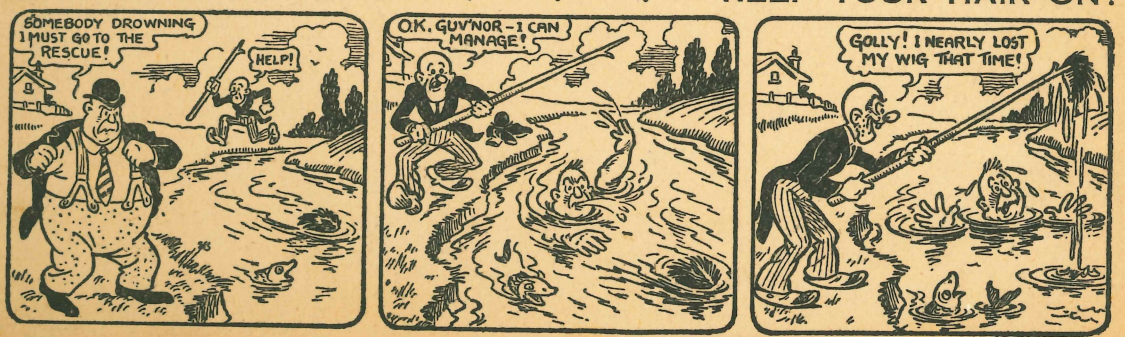
MIKE, SPIKE AND GRETA . . . SAYING A MOUTHFUL



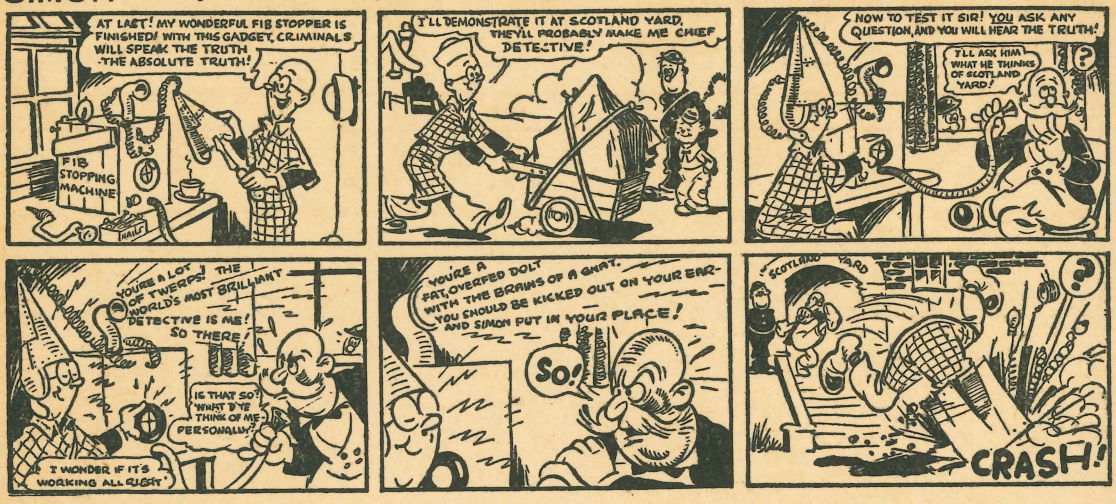

BANG! CRACK! RATAT-ATAT! RATATTAT! CRACK!
YOW! SHE'S TURNED HERSELF INTO A MACHINE GUN!
HA! HA! THERE'S A HIGH TEA OF TREACLE AND OATS FOR YOU TO-NIGHT GRETA!



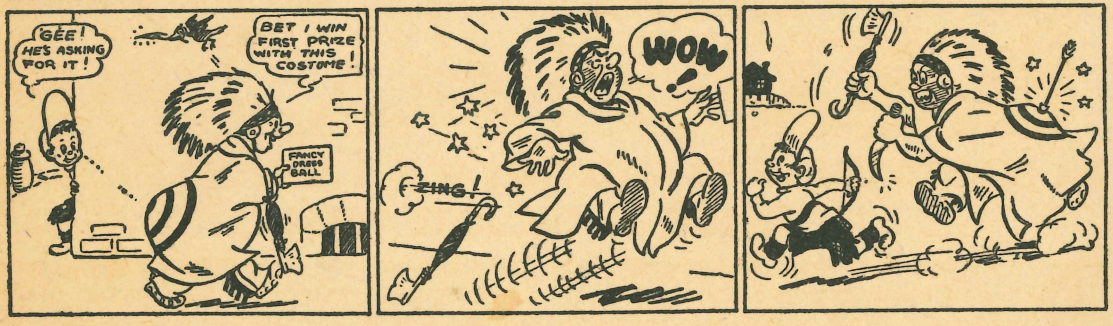
DADDY DOOLITTLE . . . . KEEP YOUR HAIR ON!



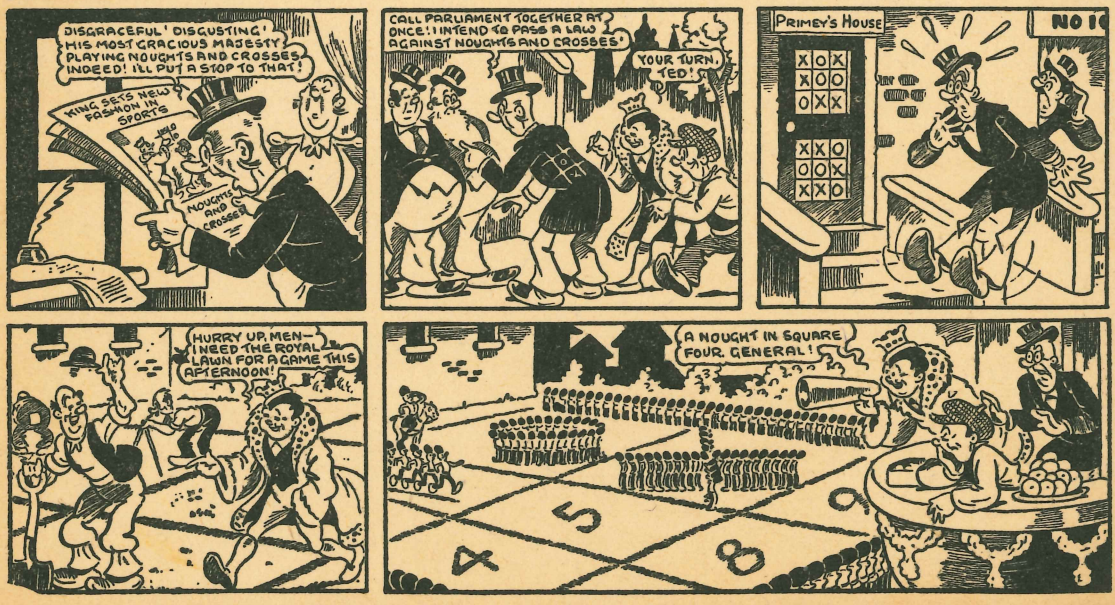
SIMON . . . . . THE SIMPLE SLEUTH


AT LAST! MY WONDERFUL FIB STOPPER IS FINISHED! WITH THIS GADGET, CRIMINALS WILL SPEAK THE TRUTH THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH!
FIB STOPPING MACHINE
I'LL DEMONSTRATE IT AT SCOTLAND YARD, THEY'LL PROBABLY MAKE ME CHIEF DETECTIVE!
NOW TO TEST IT SIR! YOU ASK ANY QUESTION, AND YOU WILL HEAR THE TRUTH!
I'LL ASK HIM WHAT HE THINKS OF SCOTLAND YARD!
YOU'RE A LOT OF TWERPS! THE WORLD'S MOST BRILLIANT DETECTIVE IS ME! SO THERE!
IS THAT SO? WHAT D'YE THINK OF ME-PERSONALLY?
I WONDER IF IT'S WORKING ALL RIGHT
YOU'RE A FAT, OVERFED DOLT WITH THE BRAINS OF A GNAT. YOU SHOULD BE KICKED OUT ON YOUR EAR- AND SIMON PUT IN YOUR PLACE!
SO!
SCOTLAND YARD
?
CRASH!

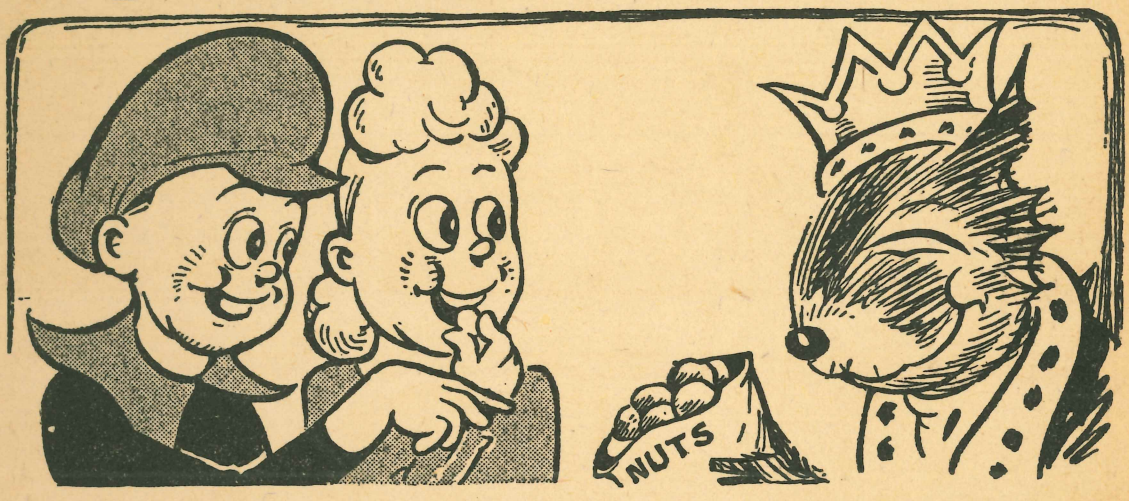
SPUNKY . . . . . OUR LITTLE TOUGH GUY



KIDDO . . . . . THE BOY KING


DISGRACEFUL! DISGUSTING! HIS MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY PLAYING NOUGHTS AND CROSSES INDEED! I'LL PUT A STOP TO THAT!
KING SETS NEW FASHION IN SPORTS
NOUGHTS AND CROSSES
CALL PARLIAMENT TOGETHER AT ONCE! I INTEND TO PASS A LAW AGAINST NOUGHTS AND CROSSES!
YOUR TURN, TED!
PRIMEY'S HOUSE
NO 1
HURRY UP, MEN- I NEED THE ROYAL LAWN FOR A GAME THIS AFTERNOON!
A NOUGHT IN SQUARE FOUR, GENERAL!

ERNIE'S PAL, KING NUTTY



THE EXCITING TALE OF THE ADVENTURES OF OUR ERNIE AND SISTER SUE IN THE LAND OF THE JOLLY SQUIRRELS

"Now, you two kids, run along, and don't you get up to none of your larks. And mind you're back in time for tea," said Mrs. Entwhistle.

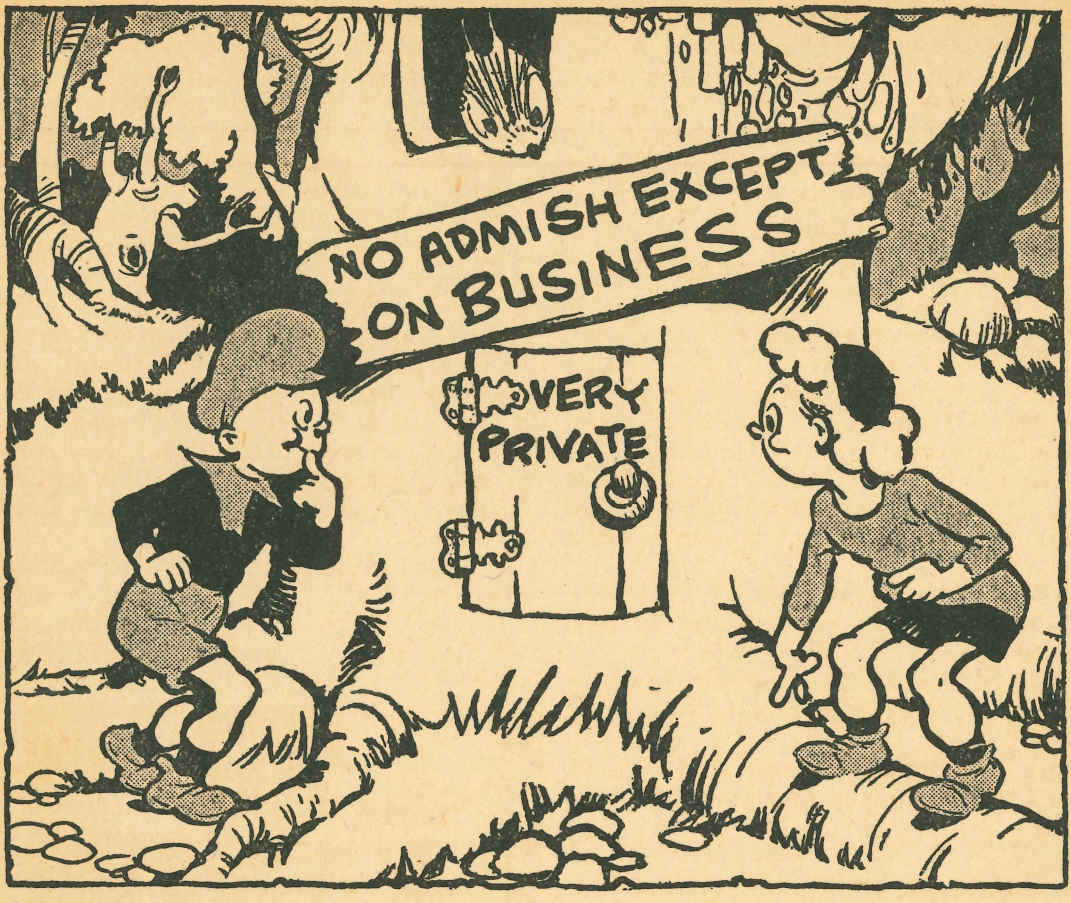
So young Ernie and his sister, Sue, trotted off to play. It was a bit silly, really, telling Ernie not to be late for his tea, because Ernie was never late for tea. There was only one thing our Ernie liked better than a nice big tea, and that was two nice big teas.

But this afternoon Ernie and Sis came as near to being late home for tea as they ever did, because the queerest things happened to them.

As usual, the two kids made for Gorham Wood, which was just across the fields from the cottage where they lived with their mum and dad. Gorham Wood was just the grandest place for games of all kinds. There were all sorts of queer trees which you could climb about on, and a cave, and lots and lots of bushes where you could have great fun playing at Red Indians, and stalking around pretending to trail each other. I expect that you'd have had tons of fun there, but this afternoon Ernie and Sis just couldn't seem to find anything new to do. They'd played in the wood so many times that it really did seem as though they knew every single blade of grass in it—at least, every single blade in the part nearest their home.

"Let's play at racing cars," suggested Sis half-heartedly. "You have the old hollow tree-trunk and pretend it's your car, and I'll sit on the low branch of the big oak for my car."

"We played at racing cars the day before yesterday," complained Ernie, "and it's too hot, anyway. I'll bet it isn't hotter'n this in the jungle." Ernie stopped suddenly and brightened up quite a lot. "I know; let's pretend it *is* the jungle, and that we're explorers. By gum, I'd like to be an explorer, I would!"



A door that led into a tree our youngsters then espied,
And so they pushed it open quick to see what was inside.

" That's a good idea ! " agreed Sis. " How do we do it ? "

" Ooo, it's easy ! " cried Ernie. " You just march along and look for places, and discover things, and shoot all sorts of wild animals. We'll explore the wood over the other side of Horley Hill. Come on ! I'll lead the way ; you follow behind me ! "

So Ernie set out, striding along, with Sis trotting behind him and feeling rather puzzled, to tell the truth. Still, she decided to follow her brother.

Ernie started to sing. He was always singing was that lad ; and, as a rule, he just made up the words as he went along. That's what he was doing this time.

" *Oh, I'm a bold explorer, and I'm marching through the jungle !*
I shoot the fierce old tiger, and the wild and woolly nungle ! "

" What's a nungle ? " asked Sis.

" Ooo, just a sort of an animal ! " explained Ernie. " And, anyway, it had to rhyme with ' jungle.' "

" I don't think that's fair," objected Sis. " You ought to make it a real——" And then Sis broke off suddenly, and her eyes went round as saucers. " Ooo, Ernie ! Look at that funny little door ! "

" Where ? " said Ernie, and then he saw it for himself. " Eee, by gum, I never saw that before ! " he ended, in a rather hushed voice.

Together the two kids crept up to the little door. It was set in a big, thick oak tree, and it was painted red. On it, in big letters, were the words, " VERY Private," and nailed over the top of it was an old piece of board with some more writing upon it :

" NO ADMISH
EXCEPT ON BUSINESS."

" Well, I never ! " said Sis.

" I wonder what's inside ? " said Ernie.

" It says ' *Very* private,' " Sis pointed out, " *and* ' No Admish Except on Business.' I expect it's something awful special in there."

" Coo ! I wouldn't half like to know what it is—I wouldn't half ! " said Ernie. " Let's go in and say we've come on business."

" What sort of business ? " asked Sis.

" Ooo, we'll say we've come to read the gas meter ! " replied Ernie.

" But the man who reads the gas meter has got a ginger moustache ! " objected Sis.

But by this time Ernie had already pulled the door open and stuck his head inside.

" Is anyone at home ? " said Ernie, in a small voice. Nobody answered. " There you are, you see ; it's all right. Come on, Sis ; there's some funny little stairs inside here, some going up, and some going down. Come on. I'm going to see what's at the bottom."

Ernie had wriggled in through the tiny door, and, feeling rather dithery, Sis followed.

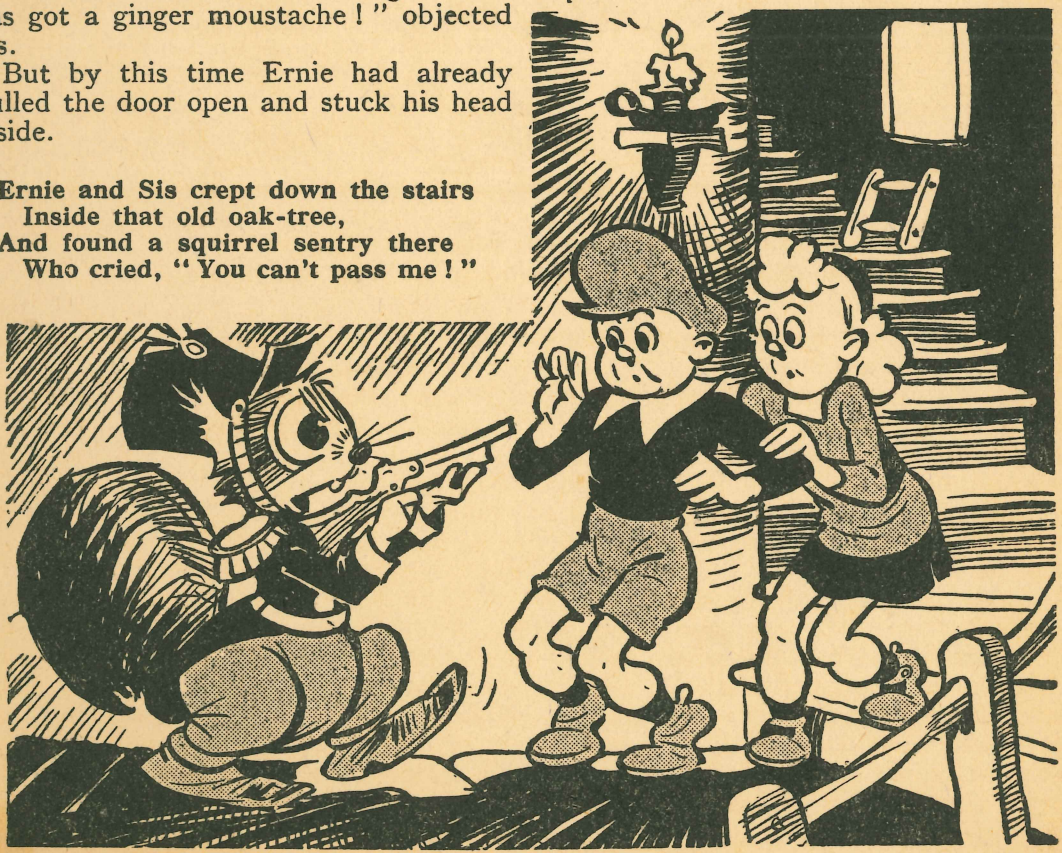
Ernie began to creep down the little twisty stairs, and, holding on to a bit of Ernie's jersey between her thumb and finger so that she wouldn't lose him, for it was rather gloomy, Sis followed.

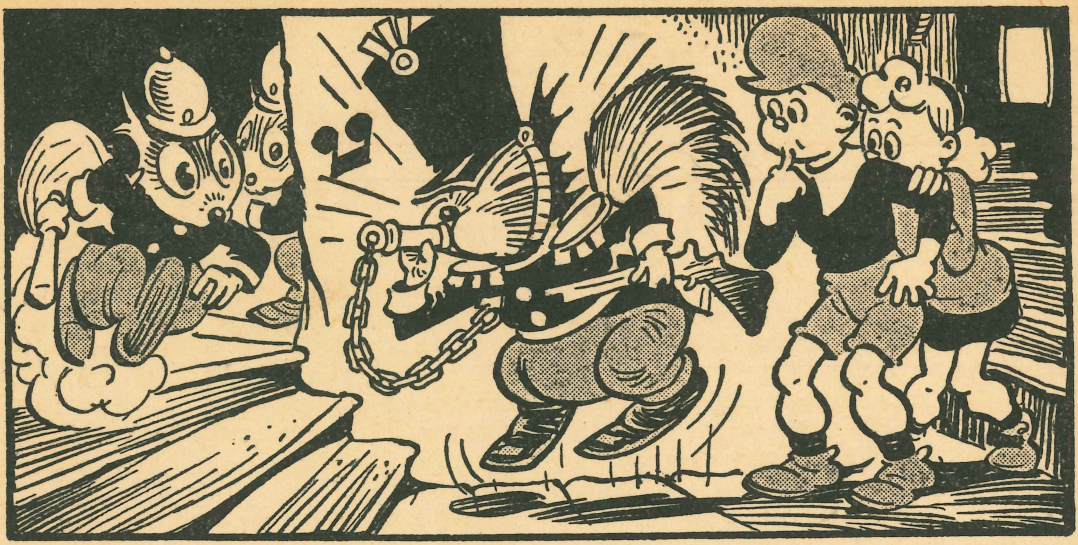
The stairs took a turn, and they came to a little landing where a candle was burning. And then they got the shock of their lives !

" Halt ! Who goes there ? You can't pass me ! " cried a fierce, squeaky little voice.

" Gummy ! " gasped Ernie. " It's a squirrel ! "

Ernie and Sis crept down the stairs
Inside that old oak-tree,
And found a squirrel sentry there
Who cried, " You can't pass me ! "





The sentry on his whistle blew until he almost popped,
And squirrel coppers came in view, and so the kids were copped.

" In soljer's clothes ! " breathed Sis. " Oo-er ! "

The squirrel had a little gun, which he was pointing straight at them.

" Who are you ? " he demanded. " And wodger want ? "

" Please," began Ernie, trying to sound as if he had a ginger moustache, " I've come—to read—the gas—meter—I have --really ! "

And his voice trailed away and got smaller and smaller, because the squirrel was looking jolly fierce. And he was a huge squirrel, too—nearly as big as they were, or else they were nearly as small as he was. Ernie couldn't decide which it was.

" Come to read the gas meter—stuff'n nonsense ! " snorted the squirrel. " I don't believe a word of it ! You don't *look* as if you'd come to read the gas meter ! And, anyway, we use candles ! You know what *I* think ? *I* think you're spies ! "

And with those words, and another loud snort, the soldier-squirrel pulled a whistle out of his pocket and blew on it so hard that Ernie and Sis thought that he would burst. He sounded like a factory whistle going off, really he did.

Well, as Ernie said afterwards, he and Sis were just feeling " flabbergarstered." So many things had happened to them, all in the last minute, that the only thing left to do was just to wait and see what happened next.

The squirrel blew, and blew, and blew until his whiskers nearly fell out and the pink tip of his nose went pale purple. And then the kids heard another sound.

It was the sound of running feet.

Someone else was coming !

Then three more squirrels came tearing round the corner of the stairs which led way down below somewhere—and these three squirrels were policemen !

When they came around the corner and saw the two kids standing there with the soldier-squirrel they pulled up short and gaped. They looked almost as amazed as the two kids did.

" Well, shampoo my tail ! " said one. " A couple of kids ! How did they get in ? "

" *He* says they've come to read the gas meter ! " panted the soldier-squirrel, who hadn't recovered from blowing his whistle. " But *I* think they're spies ! Coppers, do your duty ! Arrest them at once ! "

" Perhaps they're not spies," objected one of the policemen. " Perhaps they want to pinch our nuts."

" Well, that's twice as bad as being spies ! " declared the soldier-squirrel. " You ought to arrest them two times for that ! "

" Please," said Sis, who had just about found her voice again, " please, we don't want to pinch your nuts. We just came in to have a look round."

" There you are, what did I tell you ? " cried the soldier-squirrel triumphantly. " They just came in to have a look around ! That *proves* that they're spies ! Take them to the lock-up ! "

Two of the policemen grabbed hold of Ernie and the other one seized Sis, while the soldier marched behind with his gun. Ernie and Sis found themselves hustled down the stairs and along a lot of funny little dark passages under the ground.

Every so often they could see little bright eyes peeking out at them, and hear excited chatterings and squeakings as squirrels went darting off to tell their friends about the two kids who were being marched off to the lock-up.

Then at last they came to a thick, hefty-looking oak door, with lots of black iron studs all over it. One of the squirrel policemen produced a key as long as your arm, and, pushing it into the keyhole, he unlocked this fearsome-looking door.

It creaked back upon its hinges, and Ernie and Sis found themselves in the squirrel lock-up.

It was a great big dungeon sort of a place, with stone walls and tiny little windows high up near the roof. It was gloomy, too, for the only light came from a single lantern, which hung near the door.

This was where the squirrels locked up all their bad characters, it was quite clear. There were several of them in the lock-up now, and they looked real hard cases. They were all chained to the walls by their tails, with hefty great chains

Ernie and Sis were taken in spite of all their wails,
To a prison cell where squirrels were chained up by their tails.

that were fitted with special ring arrangements on the end, which snapped tightly round a bad squirrel's tail.

Well, really, those prisoners did look tough customers. Ernie didn't like the look of them at all. He decided that it was about time that he put his foot down with a firm hand.

" Look here," he said. " We're not spies, really we're not ! I do think you're a rotten lot. We just come in to pay you a friendly call, and you go and shut us up in your lock-up. I'm going to tell my Mum, if you make us late for tea ! "

The three policemen looked rather doubtful at this, but the soldier-squirrel just banged the butt of his gun on the floor, and said fiercely :

" Don't you listen to a word he says—spies always talk like that. Lock him up quick, before he escapes and tells the weasels all about our secrets ! And lock her up as well—girl spies are just as bad as boys—lock 'em both up ! "

At the mere mention of the word " weasels," the three policemen got very excited.

" I think he's right ! " cried one.

" Let's chain 'em up ! " cried the second.

" Bring a spare chain over ! " squeaked the third. " The sooner they're locked up safe and sound the better ! "

So Ernie and Sis were roughly pushed across the dungeon to the other wall, where several empty chains were hanging from hefty rings.

They picked up two of the chains, and dragged them clanking over towards the kids.

" Turn around and bend over ! " cried one policeman.

" Yes, and look sharp about it ! " snapped the squirrel soldier. " I've got my gun, you know ! "

And then Ernie began to laugh. And Sis, who saw what the joke was, began to laugh as well.

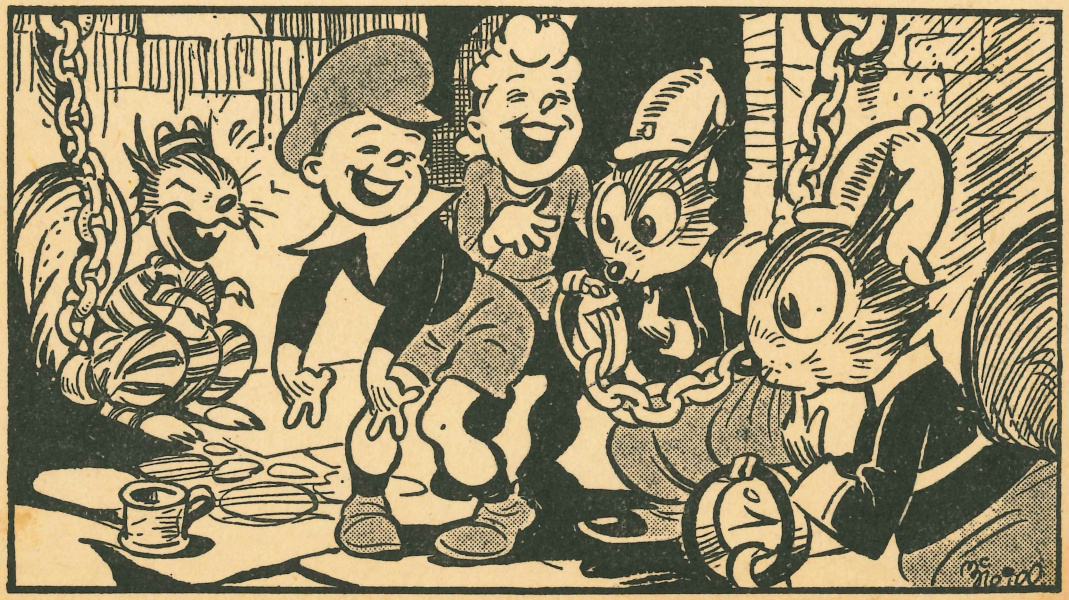
" What's the joke ? I don't see anything funny ! " snapped the soldier-squirrel. " Stop laughing at once ! "

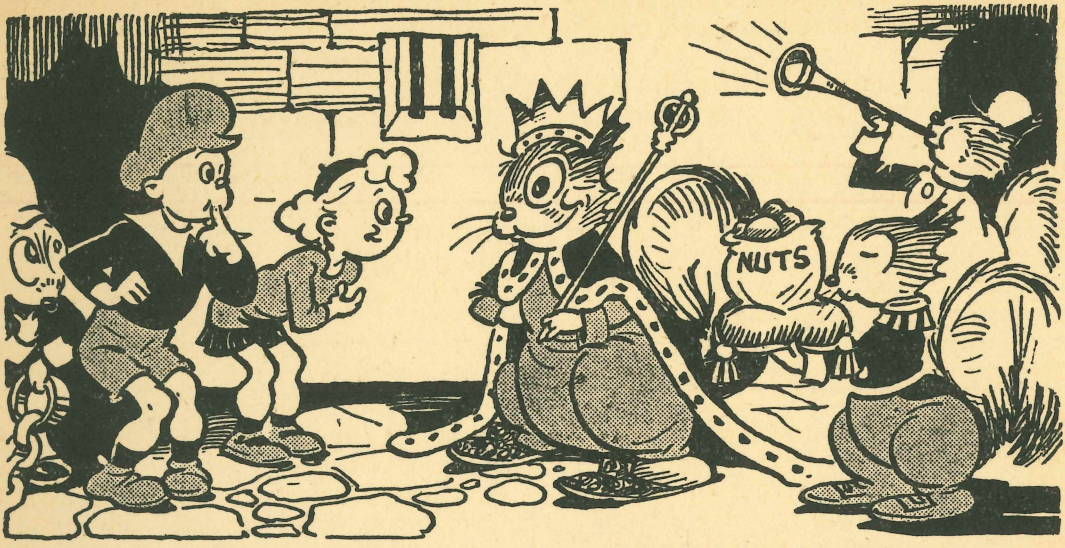
" Yes — stop laughing and turn around ! " said the first policeman.

So Ernie turned around, and those four squirrels just looked blank. Because, of course, Ernie and Sis hadn't got tails !

So they couldn't chain them up !

When they tried to chain him it puzzled them a lot,
Because a tail behind him was what he hadn't got.





The Squirrel King then entered, to ask them whence they came,
And, giving them a grin, said, " King Nutty is my name ! "

And all the bad characters saw the joke as well. And soon everyone was roaring with laughter, except the soldier and the three policemen. They didn't think it was a bit funny.

" They haven't got tails ! " gasped one.

" I call that cheating ! " grumbled the soldier. " It's just the sort of mean trick you'd expect from a spy. No tails indeed. Never heard of such a thing. There ought to be a law against people like you ! "

But Ernie and Sis went on laughing and laughing, and so did all the prisoner-squirrels.

Suddenly a new voice spoke up.

" What's the joke ? " it asked.

" We haven't got tails, so they can't chain us ! " crowed Ernie. And then he stopped laughing, and looked to see who had spoken. And Sis stopped laughing, and so did all the others.

" It's the King ! " gasped the soldier-squirrel.

" Coo ! " breathed Ernie. " A squirrel with a crown on ! "

And into the dungeon marched a merry-looking little old squirrel, with a bright gold crown upon his head, and a long red robe, trimmed with ermine. As he stepped into the dungeon, a trumpeter behind him blew a loud fanfare, and all the other squirrels bowed down low. Sis thought she'd better curtsy to the King, so she did. But Ernie didn't budge. Sis jabbed him with her elbow, and whispered in his ear :

" Don't stand there like a gormless gump, Ernie Entwhistle—be polite to the King ! "

So Ernie raised his cap, and said :

" Er—um—er—good-afternoon, King."

The King chuckled, and took a nut from a bag which stood on a velvet cushion carried by a page.

" Well, I never ! " he exclaimed. "Two kids ! What are they doing here ? "

" Please, your majesty——" began the soldier. " *He* said they'd come to read the gas-meter—but *I* think they're spies ! "

" Tut, tut—that's bad ! " declared the King. " What have you got to say for yourselves ? "

" Well—we were just passing, and we thought we'd drop in and see you—that's all," explained Ernie.

" H'm," muttered the King. " So that's all, is it. Well, I suppose I ought to punish you for walking in like that, but between you and me and my whiskers, you know, I rather like you two ! "

King Nutty took our happy pair
In through a little door,
And led them down a twisty stair
Which led to his nut store.

And then, while the two kids were still trying to think of something to say, the King turned round, and took the bag of nuts off the velvet cushion.

" Do have a nut ! " he invited them. " They're the very best—I have them specially grown for me, and they're all ready cracked ! "

" Thank you very much, your majesty ! " said Ernie and Sis together, and began chewing the nuts the King offered them.

" By the way," went on the King, " I'm King Nutty the Ninety-ninth. Who are you ? "

" My name's Ernie, and this is my sister Sue—we usually call her Sis," explained Ernie, as well as he could with his mouth full of nut, while Sis, who'd taken a bigger nut still, just nodded.

" Well, now that we know each other—I'd better show you round," went on the King. " What would you like to see first ? "

Well, that rather puzzled Ernie, because he didn't know what there was to see, so he really couldn't choose anything to see first. And as for Sis, even if she had any ideas on the subject, she wouldn't have been able to say anything, because her mouth was still very full up with nut.

King Nutty chuckled again.

" You two kids follow me ! " he said. " I'll show you all over my little kingdom. Come on—let's get out of this beastly old dungeon—I never did like the place ! "

The soldier-squirrel and the three policemen stood aside to let them pass, and as they hurried out after the King, Ernie heard the soldier-squirrel muttering to himself : " I still think they're spies—they look like spies and they talk like spies. I'll swallow my tail if they're not spies ! "

The King must have heard him, because he chuckled once more, and said to Ernie :

" Don't you take any notice of him—that's Squiggle, and he's my army. We haven't had a war for years and years, and I think he's getting a bit fed up. He thinks everybody he hasn't seen before must be a spy. But he's an

awfully nice chap, really—plays shove-ha'penny very well."

As he spoke, the King was leading the way through all sorts of twisty, dark little passages. They stopped at last in front of a little door.

"Here we are!" said the King. "This is the way to my nut store—come on!"

"Coo!" said Sis, who had just swallowed the last of her nut. "Is that where you put all your nuts for the winter?"

"That's right," agreed King Nutty, as he led the way through the door. "Now mind how you go down these stairs—they twist about so, you might easily slip!"

As the King said, the stairs did twist about, but they were not very long, and they were soon at the bottom, where they found themselves in a passage-way. At the end of the passage, they could see another door, which was open.

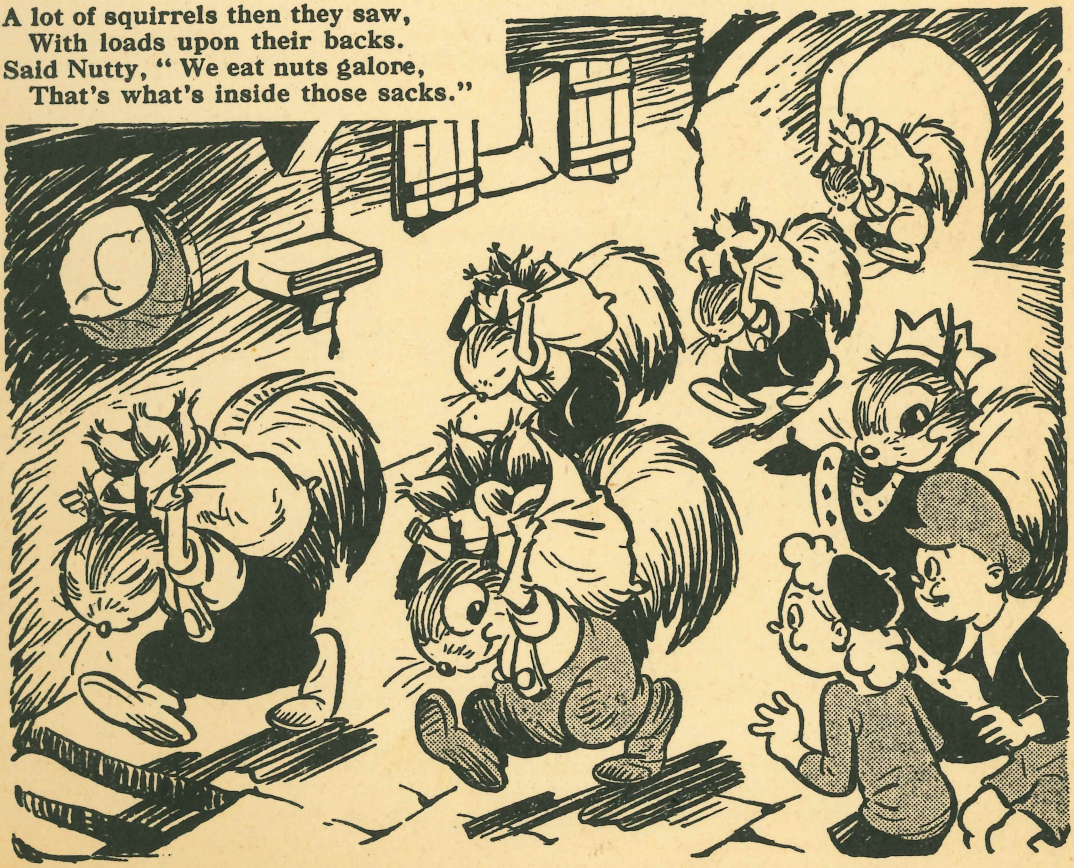
"By gum!" said Ernie. "Look, Sis—it's the coalman—see—there he goes with a sack of coal on his back. And there's another, and another—coo—what a lot of coalmen!"

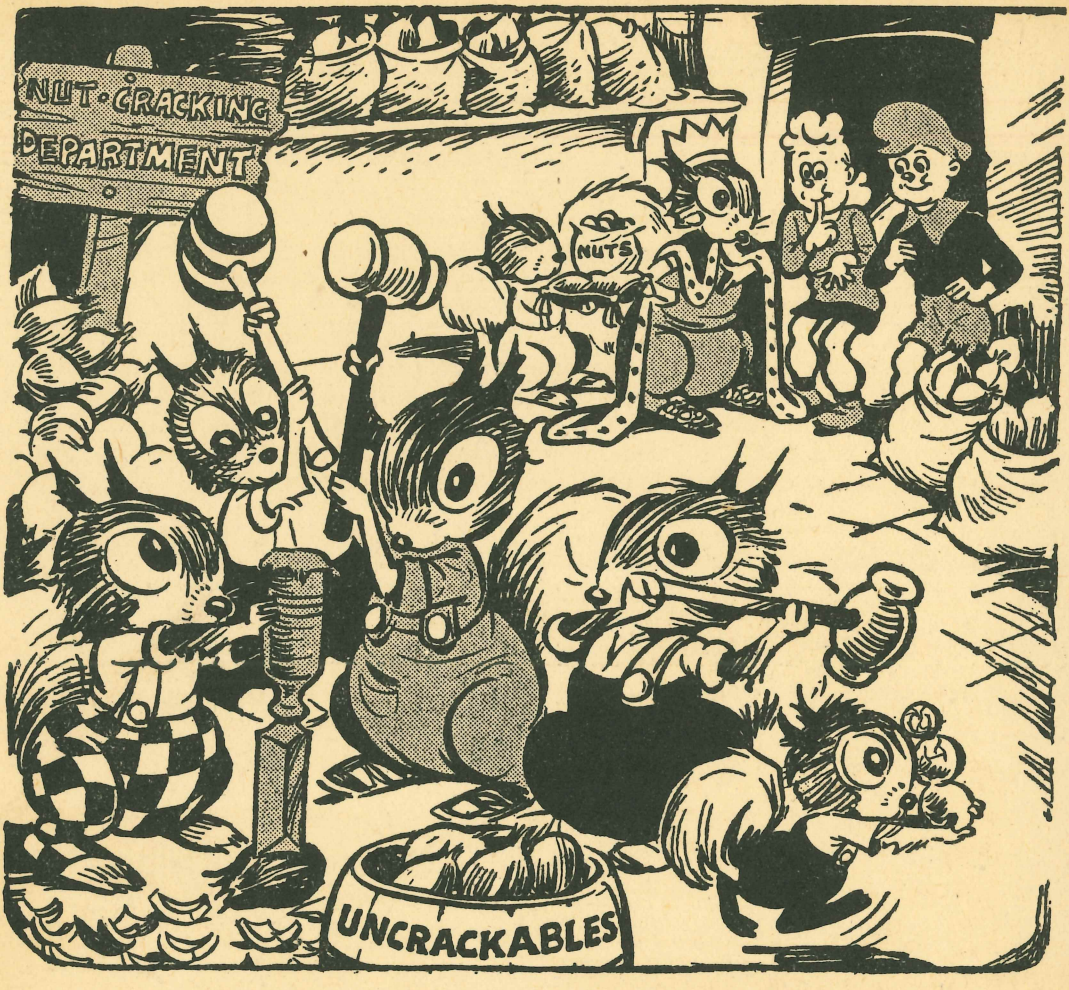
"They aren't coalmen!" chuckled King Nutty, as he led the way through the door: "They're my nut collectors! They've been out gathering nuts, and now they're bringing them all back home in sacks!"

Ernie and Sis now found themselves in a big, airy room, which led out into the sunlight on the side of a hill. Ernie reckoned that they must have come quite a long way under the ground, for now, as far as he could make out, they were right away on the far side of Horley Hill.

Lots of squirrels kept scurrying across this big room, some with sacks that were chock full up with nuts, and some with empty sacks slung over their arms.

A lot of squirrels then they saw,
With loads upon their backs.
Said Nutty, "We eat nuts galore,
That's what's inside those sacks."





" We never eat the shells," said Nutty to the pair,
" We crack them with a hammer, as you will see in there ! "

" Where do they find all those lovely nuts ? " asked Sis.

" Oh, they just search the woods for them—it's their job, you know," explained the King. " There's lots of nuts in the woods, if you know where to look for them ! "

" Coo ! " said Ernie, " I'm going to put the nut-crackers in my pocket, next time I come out. I never knew you could find all those nuts in the woods ! "

" Our nut-crackers wouldn't be any good for those," said Sis doubtfully. " Why—they must be nearly as big as your head, and yet they look just like little nuts ! "

Ernie snapped his fingers at that.

" Got it ! " he said.

" Got what ? " asked the King and Sis together.

" Well, it's like this, if those nuts look as big as that—you squirrels can't have got as big as we were—we must have got as small as you ! "

" Of course you have ! " said the King, in the most matter-of-fact tone in the world. " How did you think that you got in here, otherwise ? "

That was a bit of a poser, and while the two kids were trying to think it out, the King hurried on.

" This way ! " he cried. " I'll show you

how *we* crack nuts—come on—in here ! "

They followed the King through another door, and found themselves in the room where all the squirrels had been taking their sacks of nuts to empty them. There was a huge pile of nuts in one corner, while on the other side of the room, four hefty-looking squirrels were busy cracking the nuts as they were brought in. One of them was holding a big chisel on the nut, while the other three sloshed it with big heavy hammers.

" CLINK — CLUNK — CLONK — CLINK—CLUNK—CLONK ! " went the hammers, and one after another the nuts were cracked open, a little squirrel was busy picking up the kernels, and running off with them to another room.

" Well I never ! " said Ernie. " Just fancy—cracking nuts with hammers—coo—what are they doing now ? "

Ernie might well ask, because all of a sudden the three nut-sloshers had started sloshing three times as fast as before.

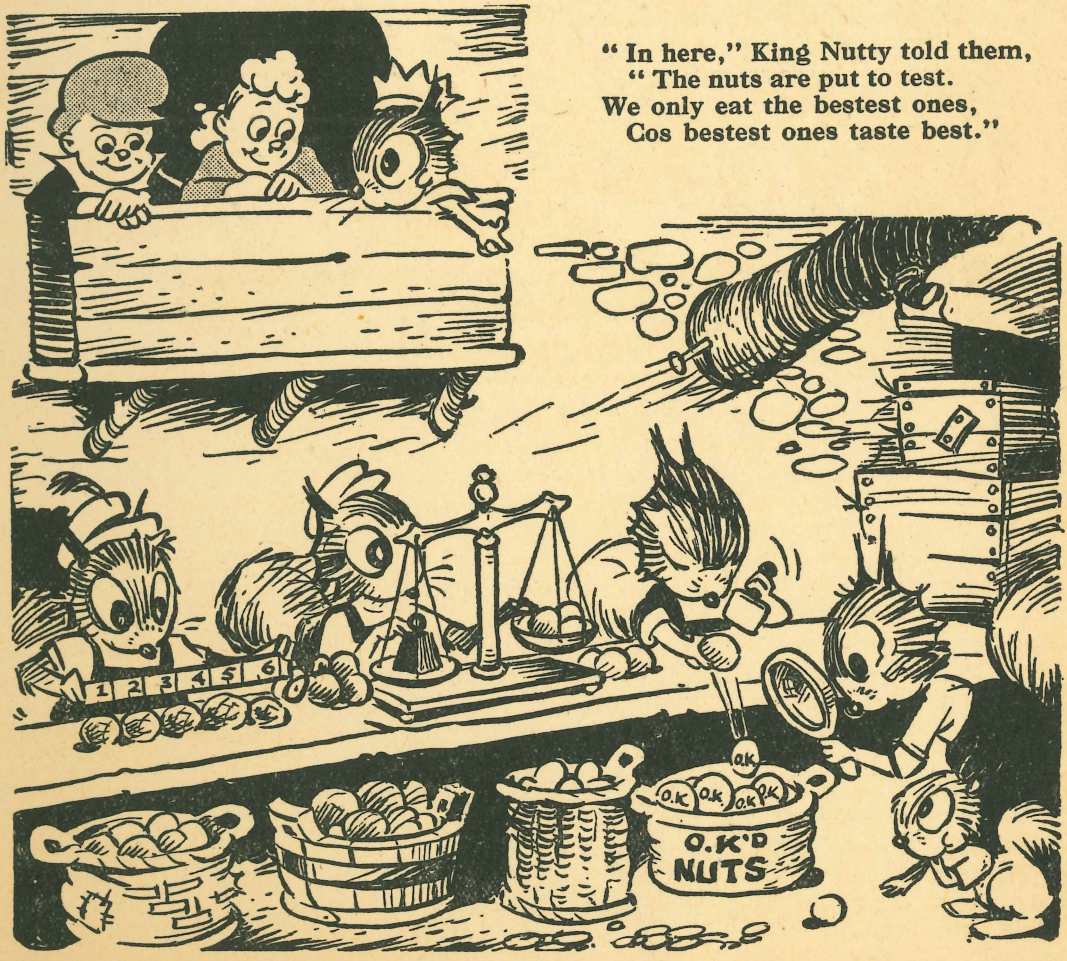
" CLINK — CLONK — CLUNK — CLINK—CLONK—CLUNK ! " went the hammers.

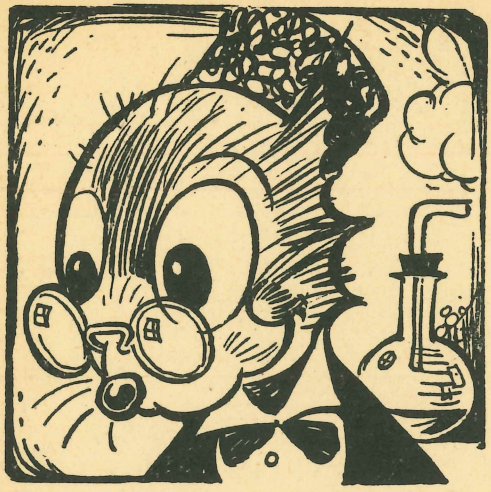
" Oh, dear ! " sighed the King. " Another Uncrackable ! All right, boys," the King was shouting across to the sloshers, " throw it in the barrel with the others—don't waste your breath on it ! "

The three squirrels with the hammers stopped walloping the chisel, and threw the very tough nut into a big barrel which stood nearby.

" I don't know what I'm going to do about all these Uncrackables," sighed the King. " They are a problem, really,

" In here," King Nutty told them,
" The nuts are put to test.
We only eat the bestest ones,
Cos bestest ones taste best."





the place is becoming so cluttered up with them. I'll have to ask Professor Wigleigh-Whisker about it ; we'll go and see him after you've had a look at the sorting-room."

" Couldn't you use a bigger hammer? " suggested Ernie helpfully, but the King didn't hear. He had already disappeared through a low archway on the other side of the cracking department.

" Come on, Ernie Entwhistle ! " urged Sis. " Or King Nutty will think we're rude ! "

So saying, Sis grabbed Ernie's hand, and fairly dragged him, still muttering about bigger hammers, across the room. Ernie would have loved to try his hand at cracking some of those Uncrackables !

But Sis didn't give him the chance. They hurried after the King, and they found themselves looking down into yet another big room.

There were long benches all around the walls, and at each of these benches were a row of squirrels busily engaged in looking over the cracked nuts.

Ernie and Sis peered over the edge of the little gallery place, where they were standing, at all the busy squirrels below.

" What are they doing ? " asked Ernie. " Are they looking for bad nuts ? "

" Oh dear no ! " put in the King. " It's the good nuts they're looking for—we don't want the *bad* ones ! "

" I see," said Ernie doubtfully. " But what do you do with the bad ones that are left over ? "

" Oh—we polish them up, and use them for billiard balls," explained the King. " Now, come on, you two—I must see Professor Wigleigh-Whisker about those Uncrackables. Perhaps he can tell me what to do with them. If he can't, I don't know who can, because he's the cleverest squirrel we've got here ! "

The King hurried back into the sorting room, and took the two kids out by another door. He led them along a passage and up a funny, twisty stairway, which led high up the inside of a tall old tree. At the top was a door, marked " PLEASE KNOCK LOUDLY, I'M A BIT DEAF."

The King took off one of his Royal slippers, and walloped the heel hard on the door.

BANG-BANG-BANG !

" All right—all right ! " came a voice from inside. " Don't knock the door down—I'm coming ! "

The little door creaked open, and an old grey squirrel poked his head out.

" Who is it ? Oh—— It's you, your majesty ! Come in ! "

The King hopped about on one foot while he put his slipper on again, and then beckoned the two kids to follow him into the professor's room.

Professor Wigleigh-Whisker had gone back to work in the meantime. He was busy at a big blackboard.

" I don't believe he's even seen us ! " Ernie whispered to Sis.

King Nutty went up behind the professor, and coughed loudly.

" Er—Professor—I want you to meet two young friends of mine—they're Ernie and Sis ! "

" Eh ? Wassat ? Ernie and Sis ? Dear me, yes—Ernie and Sis ! How interesting ! They're kids, aren't they ? Well, well, well !—I remember seeing a kid once before, in the zoo in Mole Mountain. I *think* it was a kid they had there. Or was it a blue-nosed baboon ? I forget ! But I'm pleased to meet you, anyway ! "

Ernie and Sis shook hands with the professor, who beamed at them over the top of his spectacles. It was quite clear that the professor was a very clever squirrel indeed, for his room was simply filled up with the sorts of things that professors love to collect—all kinds of twisty glass things, and tubes, and funnels, and bottles of stuff, while upon the wall were lots of queer-looking plans, and there was a blackboard covered with strange drawings.

Ernie and Sis just stood and stared. Meanwhile the King got down to his bit of bother.

" Look here, Whisker, my dear fellow —I'm afraid I must trouble you with a bit of business. It's about these Uncrackables—the place is simply overflowing with them, you know."

" Um—really—well, that *is* a nuisance, isn't it ! I don't suppose you happen to have one with you, do you ? "

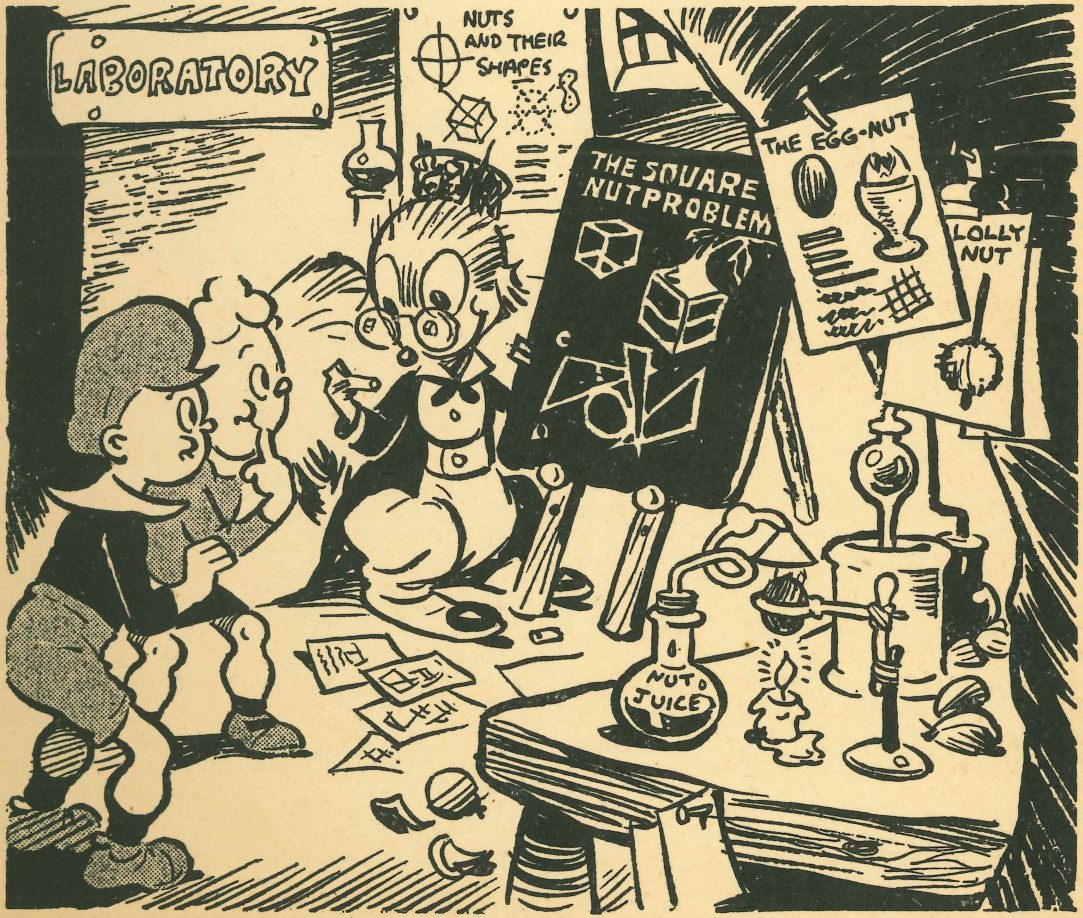
" I'm afraid I haven't," said the King —but I'll go and get one—it won't take a minute—you two stay here with the professor—I'll just run downstairs and get an Uncrackable for him ! "

And, holding his red robe up, so that he would not trip over it, the King hurried off, leaving Ernie and Sis alone with the professor.

That room of the professor's really was a most bewildering place. Ernie and Sis just stared around with eyes like saucers.

" What are you doing ? " said Ernie.

" See what I'm doing, Ernie," the wise old squirrel said,
" Round nuts don't suit me, so you see, I'll grow 'em square instead."



" Yes," added Sis. " What are all those thingummys for ? "

" I'm a Nutologist," explained the professor. " I'm an expert in nuts of all kinds, and when I get any spare time I do a bit of inventing."

" What do you invent ? " asked Ernie.

" Well, to be quite truthful, I haven't invented anything yet—but I've thought of lots of things I'd like to invent," explained the professor. " F'rinstance, there's the square nut. Now just think how useful it would be if nuts grew square instead of round, or odd-shaped, like they do now ! You could pile them up on top of one another and they'd stay put, instead of rolling all over the place like those silly round things do. And you'd be able to cut them up into nice slices, like a sandwich loaf, if they were square, wouldn't you ? "

Ernie nodded.

" They'd be easier to eat like that, wouldn't they ? " he said seriously.

" Of course ! " cried the professor. " That's just what I always say ; and there's another big problem, making nuts that are better to eat. I once tried to invent an egg-nut—just the right size to fit in an egg-cup—and I managed it, too ! "

" I think that was jolly clever of you ! " said Sis. " I'm sure I could never do a thing like that. Just fancy, eating nuts out of an egg-cup ! "

The professor sighed deeply.

" But it wasn't any use ! "

" Why not ? " asked Ernie.

" Well, it was like this. You had to get a hammer to crack these egg-nuts of mine, and the trouble was that it usually broke the egg-cup before it broke the nut, and it ran up such a bill for egg-cups that I had to give up the idea."

" What a shame," said Sis. " But I expect you'll invent lots more things, won't you ? "

The professor sighed again and wiped his spectacles.

" I *do* hope I will ! " he said.

Just then a loud sort of clapping sound, together with lusty shouts that sounded like " Cumman Gettit," echoed up the stairway.

" Dear me ! " cried the professor. " Dinner time already—come on ! "

And he frisked out of the room at an astonishing speed for a squirrel with as many grey hairs as he had.

" By gum, I wonder if they've got some dinner for us ! I could do with a bite ! " cried Ernie.

" Ernie Entwhistle, you are a piggins ! " said Sis. " What do you suppose they'll have to eat ? "

" Let's go down and see," Ernie replied. " Come on, everyone seems to be hurrying down these stairs. I wonder where the King is ? "

Ernie and Sis trotted down the stairs hand in hand, while lots of squirrels went dashing past them, all looking as if they hadn't tasted a nut for years.

" Ah, there you are ! " cried a voice from inside a room half-way down. It was the King. " Come in here and have some dinner with me. I've got a lovely joint of roast walnut, and some mixed nut soup. Come on in ! "

They sat down to a feed of nuts,
It really tasted good.
Nut soup there was, and nut-meat, too,
And last of all—" NUT PUD " !

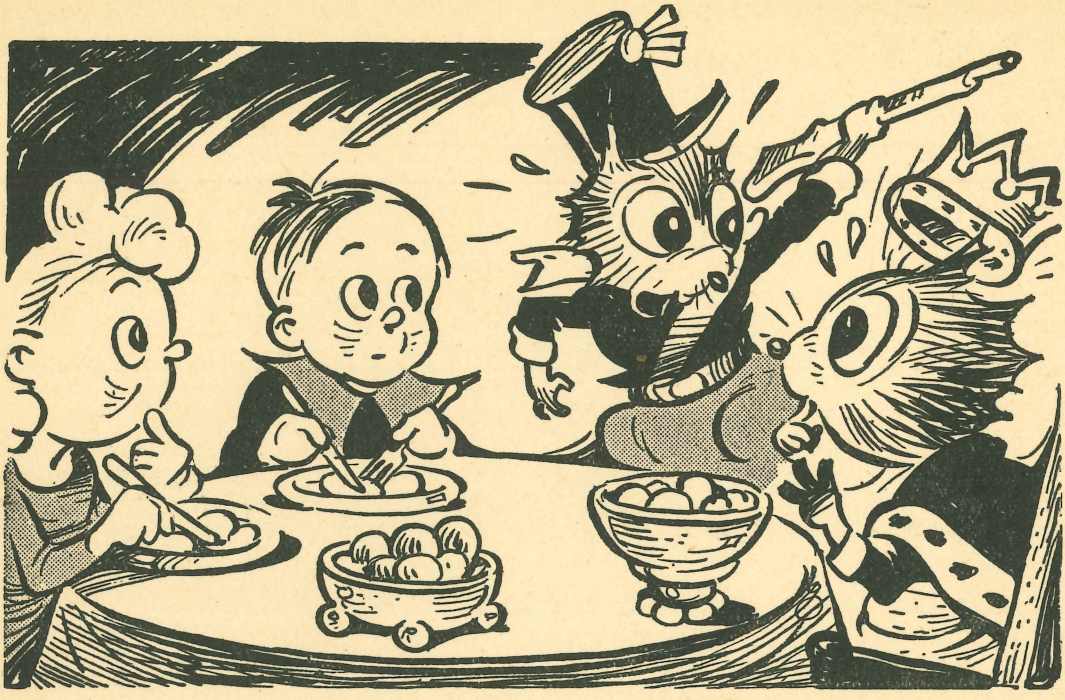
Ernie and Sis went into the room where the King was already sitting at a little round table. He waved them to two chairs beside him and they sat down. A pair of squirrel waiters began serving them with food, while at the back of the room a band started playing.

" Eee, by gum—but this is posh, this is ! " murmured Ernie, as a waiter set a bowl of steaming nut soup down in front of him.

" Don't be so gormless, Ernie Ent-whistle ! " whispered Sis. " Kings are always posh ! "

But Ernie wasn't taking any notice. He was tasting the nut soup. It was very good soup. Ernie had never tasted anything quite like it before, and neither had Sis. But then that's not surprising, because squirrels are the only folk who know how to make nut soup.

And then came the roast walnut. It was a great big walnut, as big as a joint



The enemy are coming—those nasty, horrid weasels !
" Oh, deary me ! " King Nutty cried, " I'd rather have the measles."

of beef, and one of the waiters brought it round upon a platter, and cut it up into slices on their plates. It was scrumptious !

Well, they were about half-way through their dinners, and the waiter was just serving them out with platefuls of sweet-nuts for afters, when they began to hear a sort of shouting and clamouring going on outside.

"Dear me," frowned the King, " what *can* that noise be ? All my subjects should be eating at this time of day—not shouting. I can't imagine who's making all that noise ! "

The noise was getting louder and louder, because it was getting nearer and nearer, and it sounded just as if dozens and dozens of squirrels were all hurrying up the stairs towards the King's dining-room.

Then the shouting died to a sort of murmur, and they could hear a lot of squirrel feet on the landing outside. Finally, the door burst open, and the army—you remember, the squirrel named Squiggle—came rushing into the room.

Squiggle was very excited, and he was waving his gun about in the air like mad, and spluttering and panting dreadfully.

" Hey !" cried the King. " Mind what you're doing with that gun—you nearly knocked my crown off ! "

" Your majesty ! " panted Squiggle. " It's the weasels ! "

" The WEASELS ! "

" Yes, your majesty, they're attacking. There's lots of them, coming through the woods, and they'll be here at any minute now ! "

" Oh dear—this is terrible ! " moaned the King. " This means war ! And I do hate wars ; we haven't had one for years and years. How many guns have we got, Squiggle ? "

" Only this one, your majesty," replied Squiggle. " You remember, the mice got at the other two we had, and we had to throw them away ! "

" Oh dear, this is dreadful ! What shall we do ? " groaned the King. " I do hate wars—I do really ! "

" Well, don't say I didn't warn you ! " said Squiggle grimly.

" War-warned me ? What do you mean ? " gasped King Nutty.

" Spies ! " hissed Squiggle darkly. " That's what I said they were all along ! "

" We're not spies ! " said Ernie indignantly.

" You are so ! " snapped Squiggle, waving his gun fiercely.

" We're not ! " cried Ernie and Sis together.

" Oh, do stop it ! " cried King Nutty. " Do stop arguing. We've got to do something, and do it quickly. Squiggle, you're my army. What do you suggest ? "

" Well, we might try outflanking them," suggested Squiggle doubtfully.

" That sounds a good idea," agreed King Nutty, brightening up a bit. " How do you do it ? "

" Well, I'm not quite sure. But I've read about it in books—and all the best armies do it, you know."

" That's no use ! " snapped King Nutty. " How can we outswank them if we don't know how to do it ! Oh dear—if only we had a few more guns ! "

By this time a lot of squirrels had clustered into the room from the passage, and were standing around listening anxiously. They were all looking very worried, and King Nutty was looking the most worried of them all.

Then Ernie had his great idea.

" Cheer up, King Nutty ! " he cried. " I'll help you. I've got an idea—I know how we can give those rotten old weasels a big beating ! "

" How ? " cried the King hopefully.

" Have you got any old braces ? " asked Ernie.

The King looked blank.

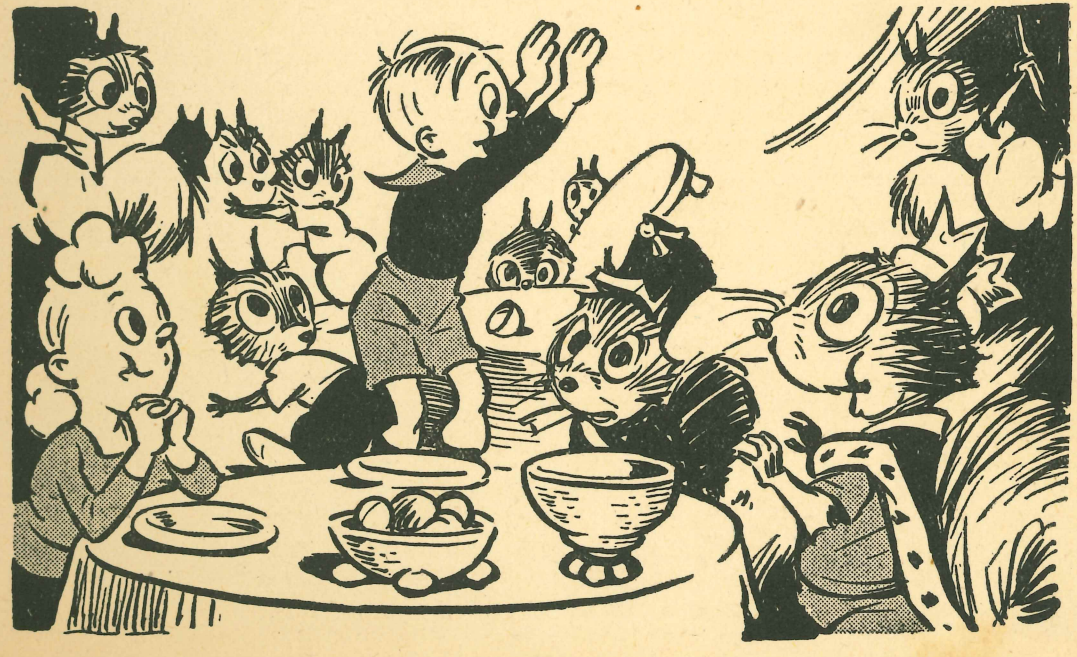
" Only the pair I'm wearing," he said. " But perhaps some of my subjects may have some spare ones. I don't see what it's got to do with beating the weasels ; but ask them, all the same."

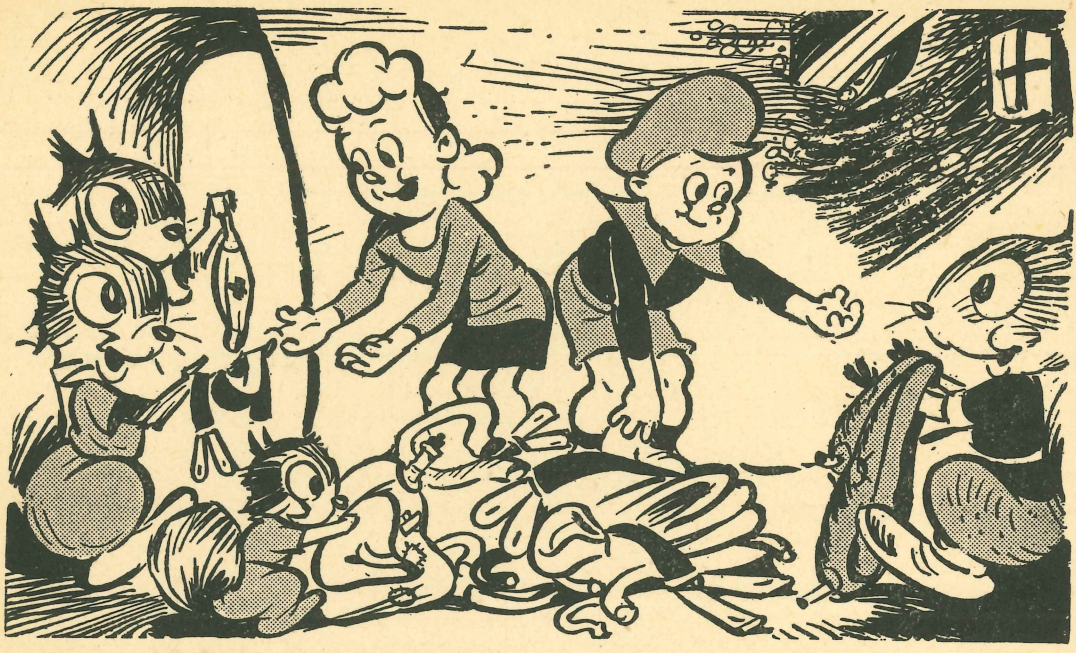
So Ernie jumped up on to his chair, and shouted out :

" Listen, everybody. I want all the old pairs of braces you can find—and any old bicycle tyres, or anything else that's made of rubber or elastic ! "

Well, most of the squirrels looked jolly puzzled, but they went scuttling off to

Ernie had a notion, so he got upon his chair,
And loudly told his great idea to every squirrel there.





**They brought out all their braces, 'cos Ernie told them to.
He's got a good idea, he has, which ought to tickle you!**

see if they could find what Ernie wanted.

The King scratched behind his left ear with the end of his fork.

"I'll be blowed if I know what you want old braces for," he exclaimed. "But if you know, that's all right. Is there anything else you need?"

"Yes," said Ernie, "I want all the Uncrackables."

"The Uncrackables?" cried the King. "Do you mean to say that you've really thought of something useful that we can do with them?"

"'Sright!" said Ernie.

"Whoopee!" cried the King, darting off. "The war's as good as won!"

By this time the other squirrels were all hurrying back with old braces, and bicycle tyres, and lots of other odds and ends that they thought might be useful.

The two kids collected them in a pile just outside the King's dining-room. When they had got enough, Ernie turned to Squiggle, who was standing around, looking rather sheepish.

"Squiggle, old chum," said Ernie. "Which way are the enemy coming from?"

"Over there," growled Squiggle, pointing out of a round window in the trunk of the tree.

Ernie peered out, and as he watched he could just see some slinky, brown shapes slipping about between the trees.

"I see," he murmured. "Now let's get busy!"

And he picked up three or four pairs of braces, and began tying them all together. Then he fixed the whole affair with a couple of nails at the sides of the window.

"That's that!" he said. "Now Squiggle—you take the rest of these braces and things and fix up lots more of these affairs at the other windows."

"Gosh!" cried Squiggle. "I see what it is—it's a catapult—and you're going to use the Uncrackables for ammunition! That's a fine idea—perhaps *that's* what the books mean by outflanking!"

And Squiggle hurried off to fix up some more catapults.

Just then King Nutty came hurrying back, and saw what Ernie had been doing.

"Aha!" he cried. "A big catapult –

well, well, well, that's a smart idea, I must say ! "

" Yes—and Squiggle's busy fixing up lots more like it ! " explained Ernie proudly. " We're going to use the Uncrackables for ammunition ! "

" Good—good ! " chuckled the King, rubbing his forepaws together. " We'll soon have those old weasels on the run—my men are bringing up a barrel of Uncrackables now ! "

And in another half a minute, two of the hefty squirrels who Ernie and Sis had seen cracking nuts, came staggering up with a barrel of Uncrackables.

" You'd better take some to all the places where Squiggle has fixed up catapults ! " decided King Nutty. " We must have lots of ammunition ! "

So the two hurried off to fetch more Uncrackables.

" Is there anything I can do, Ernie ? " asked Sis.

" You can help me watch out for those weasels," said Ernie. " They ought to be showing up at any minute now—we won't start shooting at them until they're good and close, then we'll be more certain of hitting them, and besides, the closer they are—the more these Uncrackables will sting when they hit them ! "

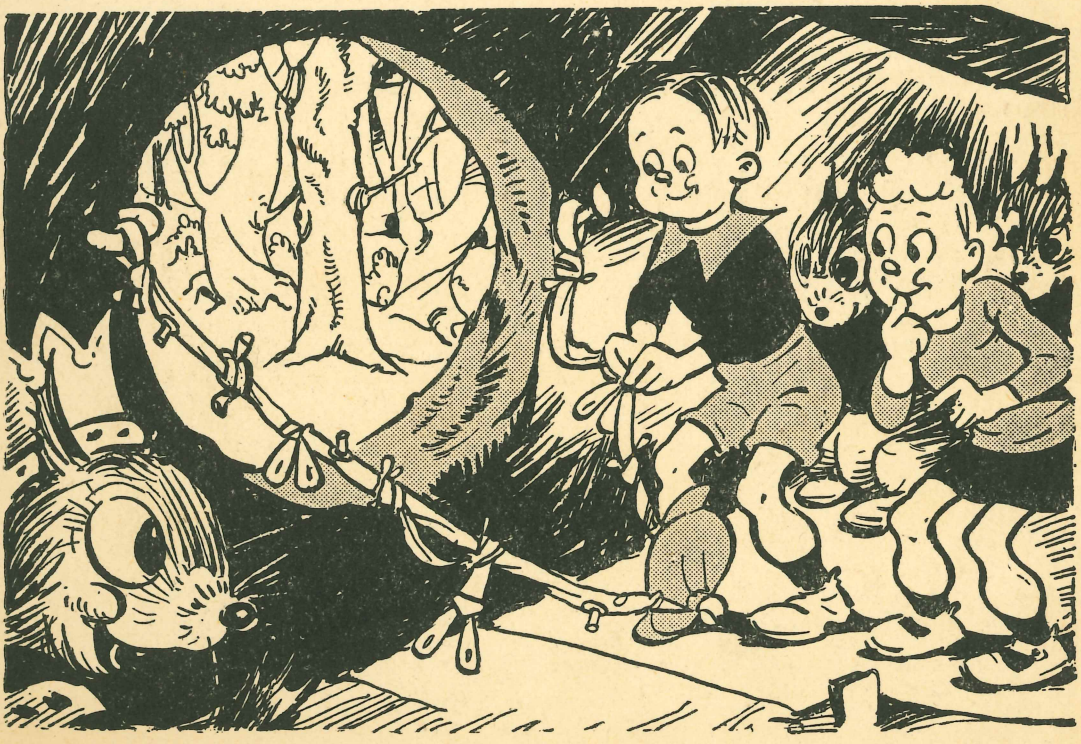
" Do you hear that ? " cried King Nutty to some squirrels who were standing near them. " Don't shoot till they get close—you'd better run and find Squiggle, and tell him that, too ! "

So Ernie and Sis, with their heads close together, peered out of the round window in the tree. The window, of course, was really a big, round knot hole, that had been made when a branch had fallen off, a long time ago.

" Ooo, look, Ernie—there they are ! " cried Sis suddenly. " They *do* look a nasty lot of toughs ! "

And there, sure enough, were the weasels, slinking through the trees towards them. They were wearing greasy, dirty old clothes, and nearly all of them were armed with big clubs.

With braces he made catapults, to drive the weasels back,
And used for ammunition the nuts they couldn't crack.



" Oh dear—aren't they a nasty lot ! " quavered King Nutty. " Oh, Ernie, are you sure that your catapults will beat them—they look awfully fierce to me ! "

" Of course my catapults will do the trick ! " said Ernie. " You just wait and see ! "

" Wouldn't it be better to shoot at them now, instead of waiting ? " asked the King.

" No, let them get a bit closer—then the Uncrackables will really sting them, by gum they will ! " cried Ernie.

Well, they waited until the weasels were within a few yards of the tree. The King got fidgetier and fidgetier all the time, but Ernie just wouldn't start shooting till the weasels were quite close to the tree.

Then—" FIRE ! " cried Ernie, and, grabbing an Uncrackable, he stuck it in his catapult and started pulling like mad. Sis grabbed hold of his wrist to help and King Nutty joined on behind. Then Ernie let go.

Wheee ! Off went the Uncrackable and——

Bonk ! Ernie, Sis and King Nutty fell over backwards !

Well, they didn't make that mistake again.

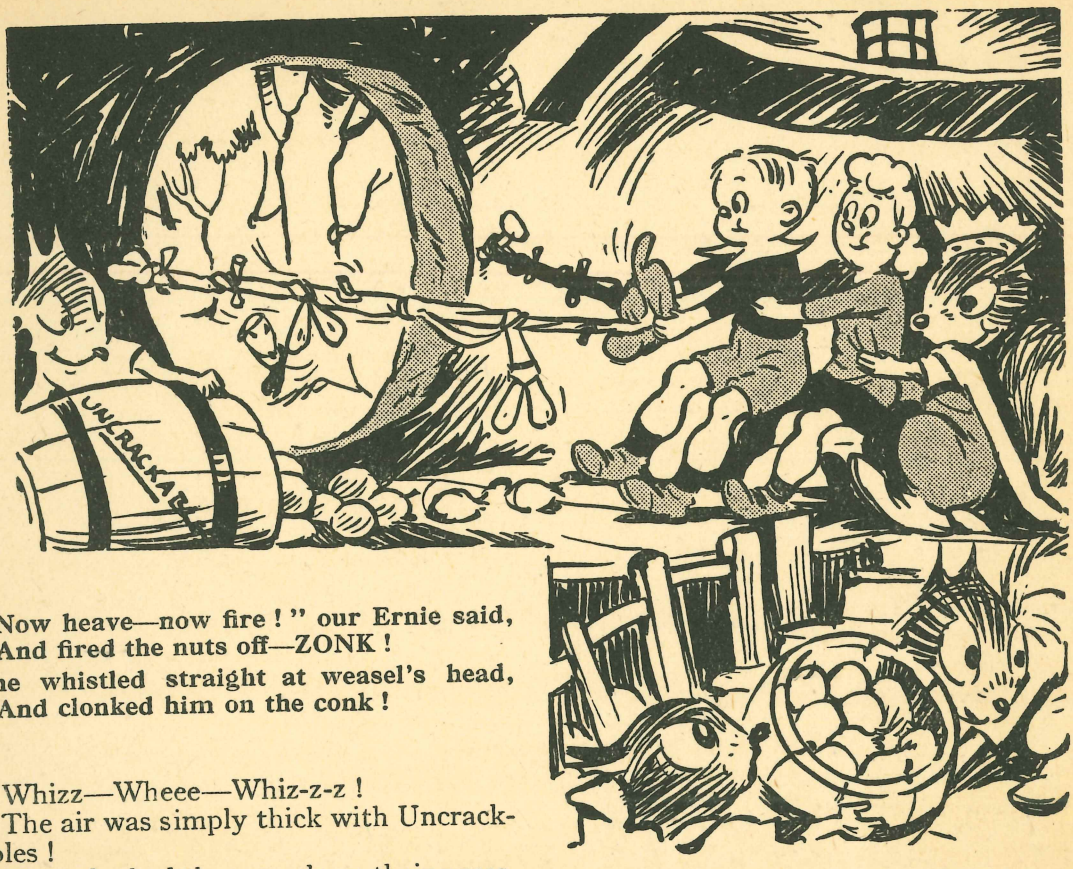
They loaded and fired the catapult as fast as they could, while all over this tree, and in lots of other trees all around, dozens of other squirrels were firing catapults at the weasels.

It was warm work, but everyone went at it with a will, and Ernie, as he worked, began to sing.

" Oh, we're shooting nuts at weasels,
And it's a luvly game ;
'Cos it clonks them on the napper
And it makes them nice and tame ! "

And before long everybody else joined in, singing at the top of their voices and shooting off Uncrackables just as hard as they could go.

Round the trees the weasels peeked,
As up towards the chums they sneaked.



" Now heave—now fire ! " our Ernie said,
And fired the nuts off—ZONK !
One whistled straight at weasel's head,
And clonked him on the conk !

Whizz—Wheee—Whiz-z-z !

The air was simply thick with Uncrackables !

They clonked the weasels on their noses, they knocked them on their nappers, and they biffed them in their bread-baskets.

Gorham Wood had become a very uncomfortable place for weasels all of a sudden. And those weasels soon decided that the best thing that they could do was to slink off home—they were just a lot of bullies, and they turned tail and ran as soon as they found out how well the squirrels could fight !

And the next day there were dozens of cases of sore noses, and knocked nappers, to say nothing of bruised bread-baskets, in Weasel Village, where the weasels lived !

As for Ernie and Sis, and their chums the squirrels, as soon as they saw the weasels turn tail and run they all let out a mighty cheer.

" Hooray for Ernie ! " cried King Nutty. " We've outswanked them, Squiggle—we've outswanked them ! "

" Good old Ernie ! " cried Squiggle. " I always did think you were a nice chap, even if I did say you were a spy ! "

They'd beaten the weasels—and that was cause enough for everyone being jolly happy. But that wasn't all. Someone ran outside to have a look round, to see that all was clear, and found that all the Uncrackables, when they had hit the weasels, had got cracked !

" Well I never ! " gasped King Nutty. " Just fancy that ! Now we know what to do with our uncrackable nuts—we'll keep them all to shoot at weasels, if we ever get troubled by them again. Ernie, you will be a great man when you grow up—you mark my words ! "

" That's what mother always says ! " said Sis proudly. " Our Ernie's a proper knock-out, by gum he is ! "

" I expect the weasels think so ! " chuckled King Nutty. " I must honour you for this. I'll present you with the Grand Order of the Golden Coconut—by

The weasels soon were put to flight,
Our lad gave them an awful fright.

gum I will—there!" he ended, "you've got me saying it now!"

Well, it was a splendid ceremony. They all went to the King's throne-room, deep in the heart of an enormous old oak-tree, and while everyone stood around and cheered, the King presented Ernie with a shining Golden Coconut as a reward for his bravery.

And Squiggle cheered louder than anybody. Because he'd found out what outflanking was—or, at least, he thought that he had. And besides that, this was the first time for years that he'd been able to put on his very best uniform with the big bearskin helmet.

And after it was all over, King Nutty the Ninety-ninth himself guided them through the passages under the ground towards the little door that led out into Gorham Wood.

About half-way back they met the professor.

"Your majesty!" he cried excitedly, "I've thought out a splendid way to crack all the Uncrackables. You just blow them up with gunpowder!"

"But they're all cracked now!" chuckled the King.

"All cracked!" gasped the professor. "And I've been working ever so hard ever since dinner to think out how to crack them!"

"Eee, by gum—he worked so hard he didn't even notice that we had a war on!" chuckled Ernie. "Never mind, Professor, perhaps you'll think out how to make square nuts soon!"

"I *do* hope so!" sighed the professor. "All this Nutology is a very difficult business."

And so the happy little procession marched on through all the twisty caves and the funny little tunnels of King Nutty's kingdom.

Every squirrel in the whole kingdom

turned out to see them off and to wish Ernie and Sue good luck.

And there wasn't half a crowd!

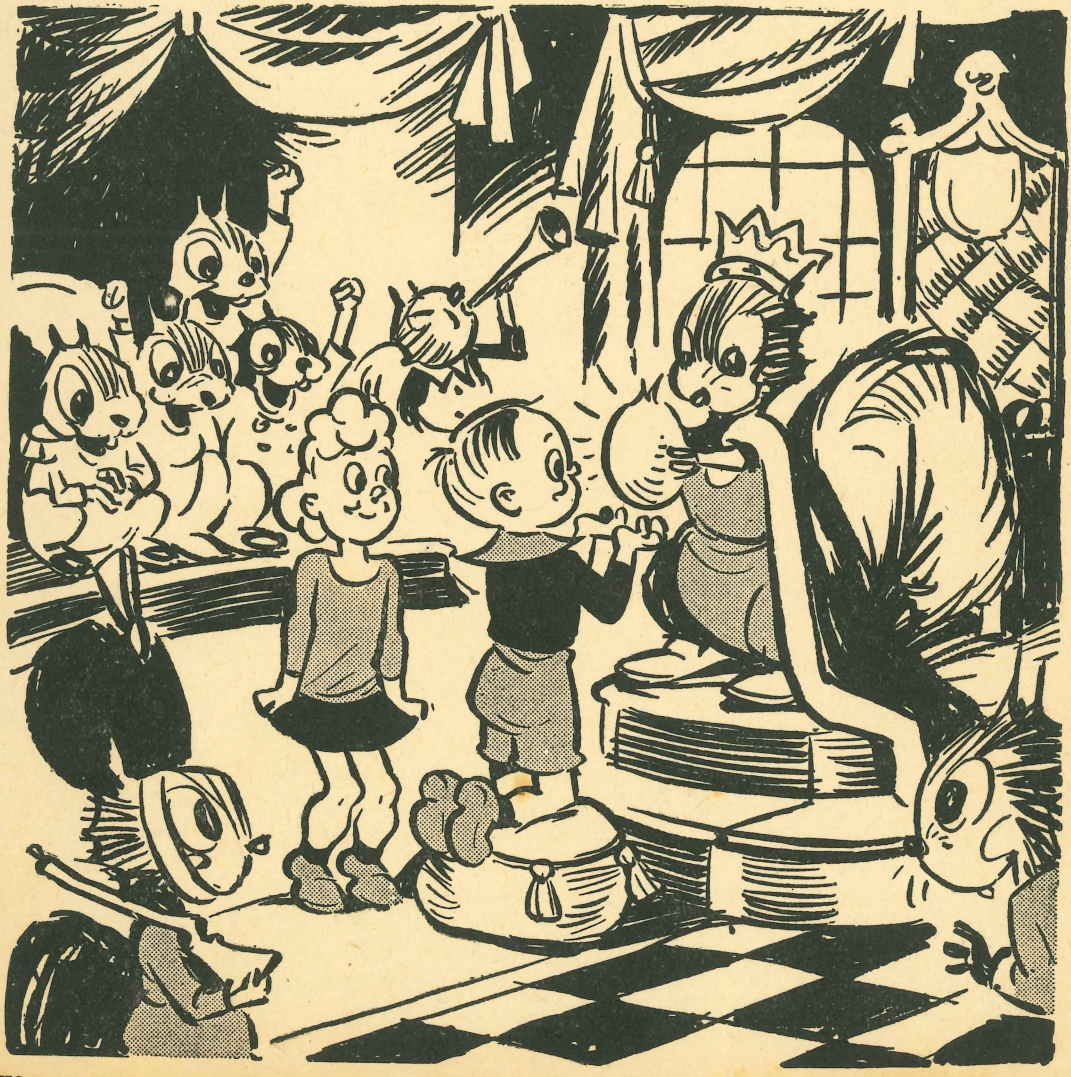
As a matter of fact, King Nutty was so pleased with what Ernie and Sis had done that he gave special orders that all the kiddy-squirrels were to have the afternoon off from school, so that they could cheer.

And all the bad squirrels, whom Ernie and Sis had seen in the prison, were let out too. The copper-squirrels unlocked the chains from their tails, and they cheered louder than anybody because they were so jolly glad to get out of the lock-up.

Ernie and Sis just marched along beside King Nutty the Ninety-ninth, blushing like anything at all the cheering. Tightly clutched under Ernie's arm was his precious Golden Coconut, which King Nutty had given him for winning the war against the weasels.

A moment later they came to the little

" You've won our war ! " King Nutty cried, " And this is your reward ! "
Our Ernie simply swelled with pride at victory he'd scored.



red door, and Ernie and Sis had to say good-bye to all their squirrel chums.

Poor King Nutty was quite upset. A little tear trickled out of his eye and he sniffed loudly.

"Cheer up, your majesty," said Ernie kindly. "We'll come back some other day and have a cup of nut tea with you."

"You will?" replied King Nutty, stowing his hankerchief away in his pocket.

Ernie and Sis nodded their heads together, and the King chuckled happily.

"Well, don't forget," he reminded them. "I shall be watching out for you."

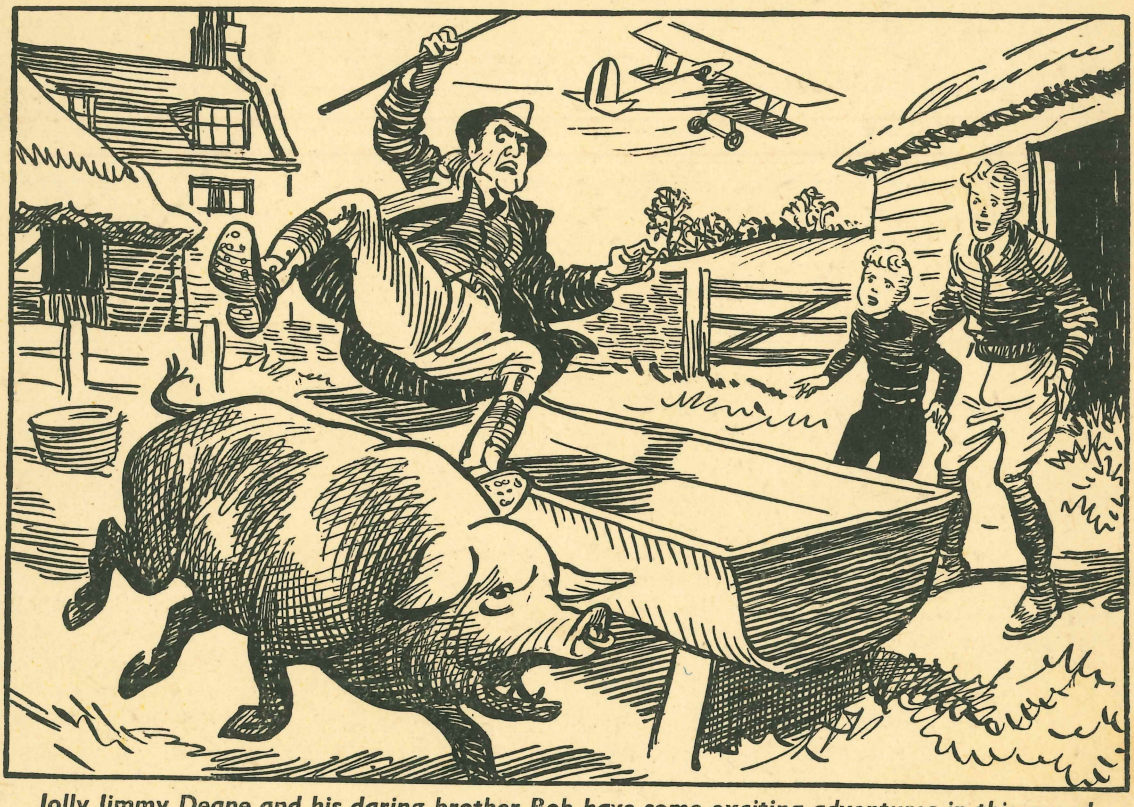
Ernie and Sis stepped out of the little red door.

And as they trotted back home through the wood the squirrels all waved good-bye to them from the treetops.

And that is the true story of how Ernie and his sister Sue were very nearly late for tea.

THE END

FARMER PERKINS' PRIZE PORKER



Jolly Jimmy Deane and his daring brother Bob have some exciting adventures in this grand circus story of flying fun and thrills.

Daisy—The Cause Of All The Trouble.

JIMMY DEANE was a chummy young chap. All the folks in Wilson's Wonder Circus called him Jolly Jimmy, because he always had a cheery word and a grin for them all.

Jolly Jimmy and his big brother Bob belonged to the circus. Jimmy was learning to be a trapeze acrobat, and though he was only a boy he could shin up ropes like a monkey and do some jolly clever tricks on the ropes.

Bob didn't actually work in the circus. He had an autogyro—one of those aeroplanes with the three big whirling blades like an extra propeller stuck up above it. Bob travelled with the circus, and did a pretty good business taking people up for rides in his plane.

Wilson's Wonder Circus had arrived at Barminster, a busy little market-town, early that morning. Jimmy, along with the others, had been hard at work getting things ready for the first performance. Jimmy had just managed to finish in time to go up for a trial flight with his big brother.

There was no happier boy in the whole world than Jolly Jimmy as he sat in the rear cockpit of the plane behind his big brother Bob. Down below him he could see the town of Barminster, and there on the outskirts of a large field was Wilson's Wonder Circus with its brightly coloured caravans and wagons showing up clearly. Not very far away was the fenced-in piece of land where the Barminster Annual Farm Show was to be

held at the end of the week. No wonder Jimmy was happy—that show would attract more folk than usual.

" And the more the merrier ! " chuckled Jimmy to himself as he sat high up there, watching the countryside skimming past beneath him. " Just three good days out of the whole week and Bob will make enough money to get that big plane he's set his heart on ! Gosh, Bob, I hope you do it ! "

As Jolly Jimmy said the last words he glanced towards his brother in the cockpit in front. For a long time Bob had been saving up to get a bigger plane, and now he had the chance of one—a cabin machine that could carry half a dozen passengers. But there was one condition—Bob had to hand over the money that week, or it would be sold to somebody else.

It was a short flight that morning, but Jimmy didn't mind. Down, down dropped the plane. That was one thing about an autogyro—the three big blades above made it possible for the pilot to make it rise almost straight off the ground and to drop almost straight back on to it. Bob could have landed the machine in a back garden, and he brought it down in that field with hardly a bump.

" Well, Jimmy, here we are again ! " grinned Bob as the plane came to a standstill on the grass. " Come on, lad. Dinner first, and then down to business ! "

A quick wash in a bucket and Jimmy was ready for his dinner. He was just sitting down beside Bob at the long table in the dining-tent when one of the circus hands came hurrying in.

" Hi, Bob ! " he called, spotting Jimmy and his brother. " Old Sam, the boss, wants to see you ! Looks a bit worked-up about something, too ! "

" Okay ! " Bob got up from the table. " You carry on with your dinner, Jimmy," he said. " I'll see what's eating old Sam. Be back in a jiffy! "

But it was more than half an hour before Bob came back. Jimmy took one look at his face and saw that something serious was wrong. There was !

" Jimmy, we're sunk ! " said Bob, before his brother could speak. " Sunk—and properly sunk at that. There's no more flying for me as long as we're in Barminster ! "

" What ? " Jimmy fairly howled the word. " What d'you mean, Bob—no flying ? Who says so ? "

" Farmer John Perkins," replied Bob. " In other words, the bloke who owns the fields we're on. He complains that our flight this morning has given his Daisy a headache—we made too much noise with the engine. He's been down to see Sam, and unless I stop flying he's going to kick the whole circus out of his fields. He says he won't have his Daisy's future ruined for anything ! "

" But, Bob," cried Jimmy, " who's this Daisy ? She must be a very important person. Who is she ? "

Bob looked up and gave a loud snort.

" Daisy isn't a person," he grunted disgustedly. " Daisy is a pig—a prize pig. For two years she's been champion of the Farm Show, and Perkins is all out to win it for three years in succession. As you know, Jimmy, the competition takes place at the end of the week, and old Perkins says it's too close at hand for him to take any risks. Daisy doesn't like aeroplanes and so we've got to suffer."

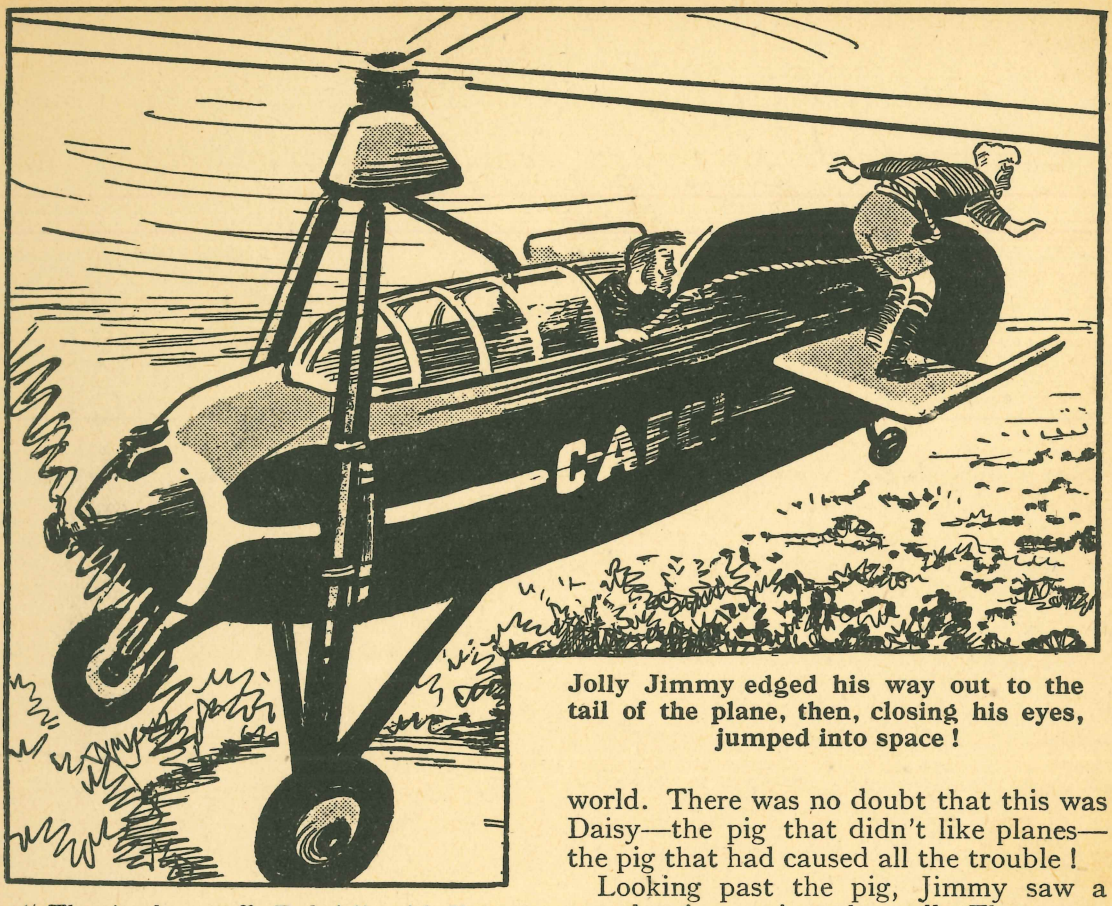
Jimmy sat silent for a moment. Too well he knew what that meant to his brother. To get his new plane, Bob had to hand over the money that week—and there seemed no hope of it now !

" Didn't you tell him how much you depended on it, Bob ? " asked Jimmy at last.

" I didn't see him," replied Bob. " He was in with old Sam when we were up in the air. His house is only about ten minutes' walk away, you see."

" Yes, I see," said Jimmy slowly. " And I see a chance—let's go over and see this Farmer John Perkins. Perhaps if we see him ourselves and explain things to him, he'll let you keep on flying."

" It's a big perhaps," said Bob, then added : " But where there's life there's hope. Come on, Jimmy, we can at least try ! "



Jolly Jimmy edged his way out to the tail of the plane, then, closing his eyes, jumped into space!

" That's the stuff, Bob ! " said Jimmy cheerily—but for the first time Jolly Jimmy didn't feel at all jolly. It didn't seem very hopeful, but it was better than sitting there doing nothing.

Marching Orders!

JIMMY DEANE blinked when he saw the house where Farmer Perkins lived. Gosh, it looked more like a mansion than a farmhouse—a big three-storied stone building, with gardens instead of a farmyard. Seeing a man working in the gardens, Jimmy and Bob asked where they could find Farmer Perkins, and were told to go round the back of the house.

There was a yard there—a large stone yard. And walking slowly round it was the biggest and fattest pig that Jimmy had ever seen. Twice champion of the county, thought Jimmy. Gosh, it looked like the heavy-weight champion of the world. There was no doubt that this was Daisy—the pig that didn't like planes—the pig that had caused all the trouble !

Looking past the pig, Jimmy saw a man leaning against the wall. That must be Farmer Perkins—the proud way he watched the pig ambling along showed that clearly. The farmer tore his eyes from the pig as he heard Jimmy and his brother approach, and glared at them.

" Farmer Perkins ? " It was Bob who spoke—in a sort of do-or-die tone of voice.

" Yes, that's me ! " replied the man gruffly. " What d'you want ? And don't shout—Daisy doesn't like the noise ! "

Bob gulped, and told the farmer why they had come. Jimmy chipped in with his piece, but Farmer Perkins didn't even let them finish. Gruffly, he told them to get out. He was out to win that championship for the third time in succession, and as Daisy didn't like aeroplanes, he wasn't going to have one buzzing round her every day for a week.

As the farmer spoke Jimmy saw Daisy's

ear twitch. He listened, and to his ears came the faint drone of an aeroplane engine. Jimmy didn't know whose plane it was, but of all the times that pilot had to fly over Perkins' Farm now.

Jimmy groaned as the noise of the engine came nearer. He'd been hoping that the pilot would go off in another direction. But no—he was going to fly over Perkins' Farm as if he were doing it deliberately. By this time the hairs of Daisy's back began to bristle.

" And that's final ! " Jimmy heard Farmer Perkins say—his voice was more angry than ever now. " Now here's another of these confounded noise-making contraptions ! " he added, as he, too, heard the sound of the approaching plane. " Now get out—I'll have my hands full looking after Daisy till that gets past. Come here, Daisy, there's a good girl ! "

At that moment the pilot of the plane sent his machine into a dive.

WHEEEEEE-EEEE !

The drone of the engine suddenly changed into a scream of power.

With a loud snort the pig whirled and ran. Yes, ran ! Round the yard she dashed, and then tore towards Farmer Perkins, who was standing waving his fist in the air at the aeroplane.

But Farmer Perkins didn't stop Daisy. The porker never even tried to dodge her master. BOOMPH ! Into him she walloped—and poor Farmer Perkins went sailing up into the air, only to land with a loud splash slap into a big water trough near by.

It all happened so very swiftly that Jimmy could only stand and stare. The next thing he knew was that his brother Bob had gripped his arm and was leading him away.

" Well, that's that ! " his brother said. " I don't think we'll waste any more time arguing with Farmer Perkins. I have a funny feeling that it won't do any good."

Jimmy, looking back over his shoulder, saw Farmer Perkins sitting in the trough with his legs waving wildly, and agreed.

To The Rescue!

It was later on that day. Jimmy Deane and his big brother Bob were sitting in the sun on the steps of their caravan. Jimmy was telling his big brother about the show when there came a sudden commotion from the main field.

" Gosh, what's going on over there ? " said Jimmy, springing to his feet. " I'm off to see ! "

Two minutes later and Jimmy was back. His usually cheery face was flushed with excitement and, rushing up to his brother, he gasped :

" A fire, Bob ! Perkins' Farm is on fire ! The whole house is blazing. Old Sam says that everybody who can be spared is to go and help to put it out ! "

Together the two brothers ran off. Already crowds of circus folk were streaming towards the big house on the hill, and when they reached it a terrible sight met their eyes.

The huge farm house was in the grip of a raging fire. The whole bottom floor was a mass of flames, which was already spreading upwards. The Barminster Fire Brigade had been sent for and in the meantime farm hands and circus hands were passing buckets of water in a gallant but hopeless fight against the flames.

Jimmy and Bob ran to join them, but stopped as they saw a number of men struggling together. To their amazement, it was Farmer Perkins in the grip of three of his farm hands, and he was kicking and struggling like a madman.

" Hi, what's going on here ? " asked Bob as he and Jimmy pulled up. " What's he trying to do—get into the house ? "

" Yes, the master be trying to do that," gasped one of the farm hands. " Y'see, young Dolly be in there. She be trapped on the roof, sir. Farmer Perkins wanted to go after her, but the whole bottom of the house be ablaze. No man could reach the stairs—it be folly to risk another life ! "

" Dolly ? " said Bob. " Who is Dolly—another prize pig ? "

" No, sir ! " replied the farm hand.

The party was started off by Farmer Perkins proudly leading Daisy, the prize porker, into the tent. Grinning happily, Jolly Jimmy was astride the pig.

" She be Farmer Perkins' little niece who's come on holiday."

One of the other men chipped in. He said that Dolly had been forgotten in the first excitement. Then the housekeeper had suddenly remembered that she had last seen the little girl playing on the flat roof. By that time the whole of the bottom floor was ablaze. There was only one hope—that was that the Barminster Brigade would arrive in time with their long escape ladders.

But when would that be? The roads around the farm were too rutty to let the engine make a decent speed. By the time they got there the whole building might be ablaze. There would be no hope for little Dolly Perkins then.

" Come on, Jimmy—it's up to us! "

Jolly Jimmy, who'd been staring at the flames, gave a start. It was Bob's voice —what did he want? But Bob was already running—away from the fire.

Down the hill he raced, and Jimmy tore after him. Bob had some stunt of his own, so Jimmy didn't waste time and breath by asking questions. He raced after his big brother, then his eyes opened wide when he saw they were heading for the field where the plane was standing.

But Bob didn't go straight for the plane. He rushed into the caravan, and when he came out he carried a strong coil of rope. Hastily he tied a loop on the end, in a running noose, and as he worked he spoke to Jimmy in excited gasps. When he finished he looked his brother straight in the eyes.

" I know it's asking a lot, Jimmy," said Bob huskily. " But it's for the sake of that little girl. Are you game? "

Jolly Jimmy looked back just as steadfastly.

" Of course, Bob! " he said quietly. " I'm game! "

A quick squeeze on Jimmy's shoulder,

then Bob swung his younger brother into the plane. Less than a minute later Bob was sending the plane up into the sky.

It didn't take long to cover the short distance to the farm.

Bob, at the controls, circled the plane. Being an autogyro, the machine could almost hang stationary in the air by means of the three whirling blades above it. Narrower and narrower came the circles, the plane seemed hardly to move. Peering over the edge, Jimmy saw little Dolly lying on the roof—luckily the little girl had fainted.

Jimmy glanced towards Bob. His brother had turned his head and was grinning encouragingly, then his hand lifted in a signal. Now!

Jimmy stood up in the cockpit. Round his body was the looped end of the rope, the other end being tied fast to the control column of the plane. Bob had the slack in his hands ready to pay out. Then Jimmy saw his brother's lips move, forming the words "Good luck," and with a gulp the brave boy swung his leg over the edge of the cockpit and edged his way out on to the tail of the plane. Closing his eyes, Jimmy jumped.

Down, down, down! Gradually Bob paid out the rope, and lower Jimmy dropped towards the roof of the burning building.

Would he never reach that roof? thought Jimmy. His eyes were fixed unwaveringly on the huddled form of little Dolly.

Then scr—ape! Jimmy felt his feet scrape along the roof-top. He was going straight towards little Dolly. Then he gasped. The rope had twisted; he was swinging away from her. Desperately he twisted his body; the rope spun round again. A quick grab, then Jimmy felt as if his arms were being jerked from his body. A quick change of hold and there he was, swinging out over the edge of the roof with little Dolly in his arms.

Sweat poured from Jimmy in streams. Dolly hung like a dead weight in his arms. Already they ached like anything. Would he be able to hold her long enough? Looking down, he saw crowds of people still on the edge of the pond. The plane was dropping lower.

Jimmy let Dolly drop. Straight into the water of the pond she went. Jimmy saw a big fountain of water shoot up; then he gasped with relief as he saw about half a dozen men jump into the pond. Dolly would be all right now.

Round came the plane again, and Jimmy began to work feverishly at the knot on the rope. He was over the pond again. Would that knot never loosen? Ah . . .

Jimmy was dropping swiftly. He saw the pond rush up to meet him. The breath was knocked out of his body as he hit the water with a terrific splash, and then Jimmy remembered no more.

He never felt himself being pulled out of the water by willing hands. He didn't hear the other cheers when Bob landed and came rushing to see how he was.

When Jolly Jimmy opened his eyes again there were two men sitting beside his bed. One was his big brother Bob; the other was Farmer Perkins, who poured out his thanks to the boy who had gallantly risked his life to save his niece. Gosh! Jimmy didn't know what to say.

But Farmer Perkins showed his gratitude to Jimmy and his big brother. He allowed Bob to fly his plane all the week—and a very successful week it was. Bob got that big plane he had set his heart on, and as for Jimmy, he's always had a notion to become a pilot like his brother, and there's a nice sum of money in the bank to make sure that he gets the very best of training when he's old enough.

On the night before Wilson's Wonder Circus moved away, Farmer Perkins gave a big party in the circus tent.

The party was started off by Farmer Perkins proudly leading Daisy, the prize porker, into the tent. Jolly Jimmy, grinning happily, was astride the pig, which carried a large label reading "First Prize" round its neck. For Daisy had won first prize for the third time in succession, in spite of everything.

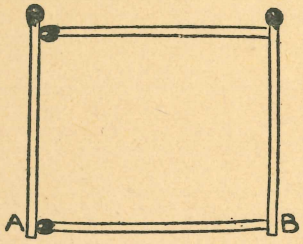
And the circus tent resounded to the rousing cheers for Jolly Jimmy Deane.

THE END

TRY THESE TRICKS ON YOUR CHUMS!

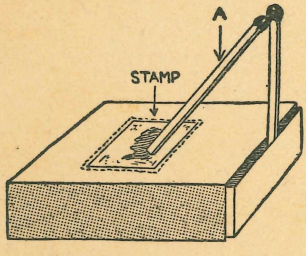
HERE ARE A FEW TRICKS THAT WILL GIVE YOUR PALS SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT NEXT TIME YOU HAVE A PARTY.

HERE'S a simple one to start with. Place four matches on the table like this :



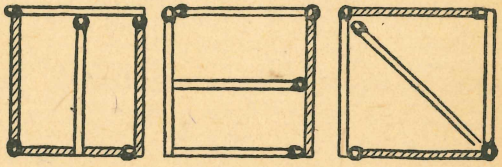
Now give your chum two more matches and ask him to pick up the four matches just as they are. You'll roar with laughter as time and time again the matches will fly about in all directions. Actually, the square should be gripped firmly at the points marked " A " and " B " in the above drawing, and the four matches can then be lifted quite easily.

While you've got the match-box out, here's another trick which will certainly floor your pal. Place a stamp on the match-box. Then take two matches. One match should be wedged firmly upright by placing it in the match-box tray and almost closing the box ; and the other match should be placed on the stamp so that it rests up against the upright match—just as you see here :



You must now ask your friend to remove the stamp without touching or moving the matches in any way. When he gives up, you can show him how it's done. Light the sloping match at the point marked " A " in the drawing. The match will burn up towards its head. The two match heads will, of course, flare up. Let them burn for about ten seconds, then blow the flame out. If you watch closely you will see the match which rests on the stamp suddenly rise off the stamp. You can then blow the stamp off the match-box.

Now arrange fifteen matches on the table like this :



Ask your chum to take away six matches from the fifteen and leave ten. This will give him something to think about, and after he has given up, take away the matches which are shaded in the above sketch, thus leaving the word " T E N."

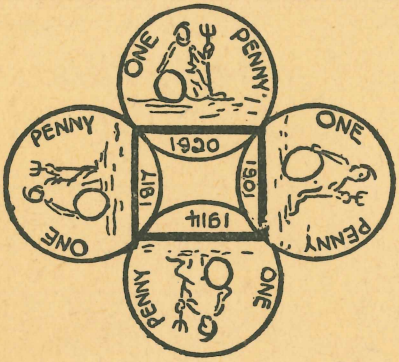
Ask your pal if he's got a shilling. If he has tell him you'll give him eighteen-pence for it. See him rush to hand over that bob! " Money for jam," he'll say. Right ; take his bob and give him eight pennies. " Hi, what's this? " he'll ask. " Eighteenpence, you said." " Well," you answer, " that is eight-in-pence! " It's a catch, but a good one. Easy, isn't it?

Before your chum's got over that one, get a pencil and write this down on a piece of paper :

1/6d ME A KIPPER!

" What does this mean? " you ask your pal. Wait for a few moments while he tries to think it out, then tell him. "' Bob Tanner sent me a kipper! '" " But where's the 'sent'? " he's bound to say. " Why, the 's(c)ent' is in the kipper, of course," you reply, laughing.

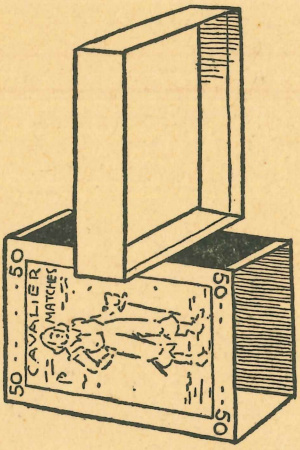
Hand your chum four pennies and ask him to make a square with them. Here's how it's done. Lay all the coins down so that " Britannia " is uppermost on all of them. You will see that there is a straight line above the date on each penny. Arrange the pennies like this :



Your chum will see a perfect square.

Here's a trick that will make your friends gasp with wonder. Take a half-penny and damp one side of it. Then press it on your forehead and at the same time push it slightly along. You will then find that the coin will remain there for any length of time !

Lastly, arrange an empty match-box just like this :

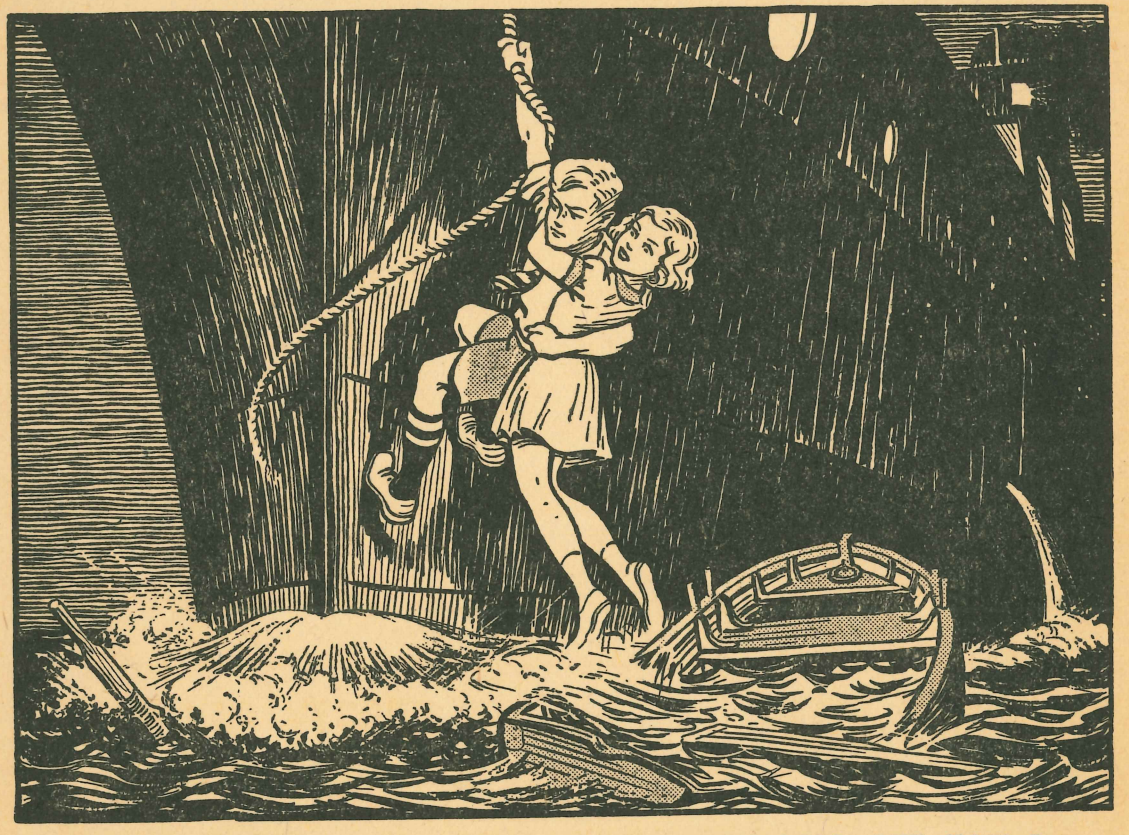


Now ask your chum to smash the box by bringing his fist down heavily on top of the match-box drawer. He will think it's easy, but watch his face when the match-box flies off into the air—*quite undamaged !*

PERCY AND STEVE . . . . THE SPORTY FUN-MAKERS

LOOK HERE PERCY WE WANT TO MAKE SURE OF GETTING INTO THE FOOTBALL TEAM THIS YEAR, DONT WE ?
YES INDEED!
WELL, LISTEN. BILL QUIRK IS CAPTAIN LET'S SEND HIM A CHRISTMAS PRESENT THEN HE'S BOUND TO DO HIS BEST FOR US!
FINE!
GOOD MORNING MRS QUIRK MERRY CHRISTMAS! WILL YOU GIVE THIS TO BILL WITH OUR COMPLIMENTS
THANK YOU! BILL WILL BE PLEASED
HE WAS ONLY SAYING HE CAN EAT AS MUCH AS HE LIKES THIS CHRISTMAS BECAUSE -
HE'S RESIGNED FROM THE FOOTBALL CLUB!
IT'S ALL RIGHT THEY HAVENT HEARD US!

THE SECRET OF THE "SEADYKE"



A THRILLING STORY OF PERIL ON THE HIGH SEAS, AND HOW A PLUCKY BRITISH BOY AND GIRL DEFEATED A NAZI PLOT

The Mystery Ship

"TAKE the tiller, Pat," said Tom Hayward to his sister, "and you'd better have this pocket compass to guide you—it's lucky I brought it."

Tom and Patricia—of course, everyone called her Pat—had caught a nice lot of fish in their little boat, and had been sailing back in the direction of Canvey Island. But weather in the Thames mouth can be treacherous at times, and now the wind had died away and fog was swiftly creeping up.

Now and again a ship's siren sounded. Sirens were not used so much as in the days before the war had started, but Tom and Pat were worried because sirens proved that ships were on the move.

Zooooom! The note of one siren sounded near, and they looked round them, trying to pierce the mist.

"It's funny, Tom," remarked Pat. "You can never tell from which way sound comes in a fog."

Hardly had she spoken when, looming through the grey fog, came the high bows of a steamship!

Tom gave a shout of alarm. He dropped the oars and leaped up—and not a split second too soon! The ship sheered through their little boat just for'ard of where he had been sitting. He

found his left arm round Pat's waist, who had also jumped up, and his right hand grabbed a swinging rope that came within his reach as the sea-water burbled into their wrecked boat.

Luckily for both of them, the ship was going dead slow. During a couple of breath-taking seconds, Tom hung there, with Pat held in his other arm, her feet lapped by the water.

" Ahoy ! Help ! " Tom shouted. " Lend a hand ! "

There was a stir aboard the steamship. Startled seamen peered over the rail, and saw the boy and girl in their dangerous plight.

A rope was flung down to them, and Pat grabbed hold of it, relieving Tom of her weight only just in time. Then, gradually, both were hauled up to the deck.

They found themselves among a number of foreign seamen, and one of them took Tom and Pat up to the bridge to the captain—a man with a pointed beard, who fixed them with his grey eyes and spoke in fairly good English.

" Der nice pickle you have got into ! " he snapped. " We don't want der passengers here."

" My hat ! We don't want to be passengers ! " panted Tom. " You cut our boat down, so please arrange for us to be put ashore somehow, 'cause Dad and Mum will be nearly worried to death if we don't get home before dark."

" Perhaps we can have you put on the end of Southend Pier," the skipper said. " You go below, leedle ones, and der cook will give you cocoa."

They thanked him, and asked what ship they were on. After a little hesitation, the skipper told them that he was Captain Hansden, and this was the Dutch cargo ship Seadyke, outward bound from Gravesend.

They had some cocoa, and waited for a while, but there was no sign of the ship stopping.

" We'd better see Captain Hansden again, Pat," suggested Tom.

They went to the door of the small cabin where the cook had taken them, and, in growing alarm, discovered that it was locked ! In vain they called out and knocked, but the time dragged on and no one came to them.

It was two hours later when they were let out by Captain Hansden himself, who merely said that " der door must have got jammed."

" Now listen, leedle ones," the skipper said, smiling. " Der fog was too bad, and I could not do anything mit you. You will be sent home to England from Amsterdam."

" Amsterdam—why, that's in Holland ! " cried Tom.

" It is der best I can do, my friendts. Already I have sent der wireless message about you to der British Admiralty signal station at Southend."

Tom and Pat felt sure that was not true, and they both felt frightened by the skipper's strange and sinister manner.

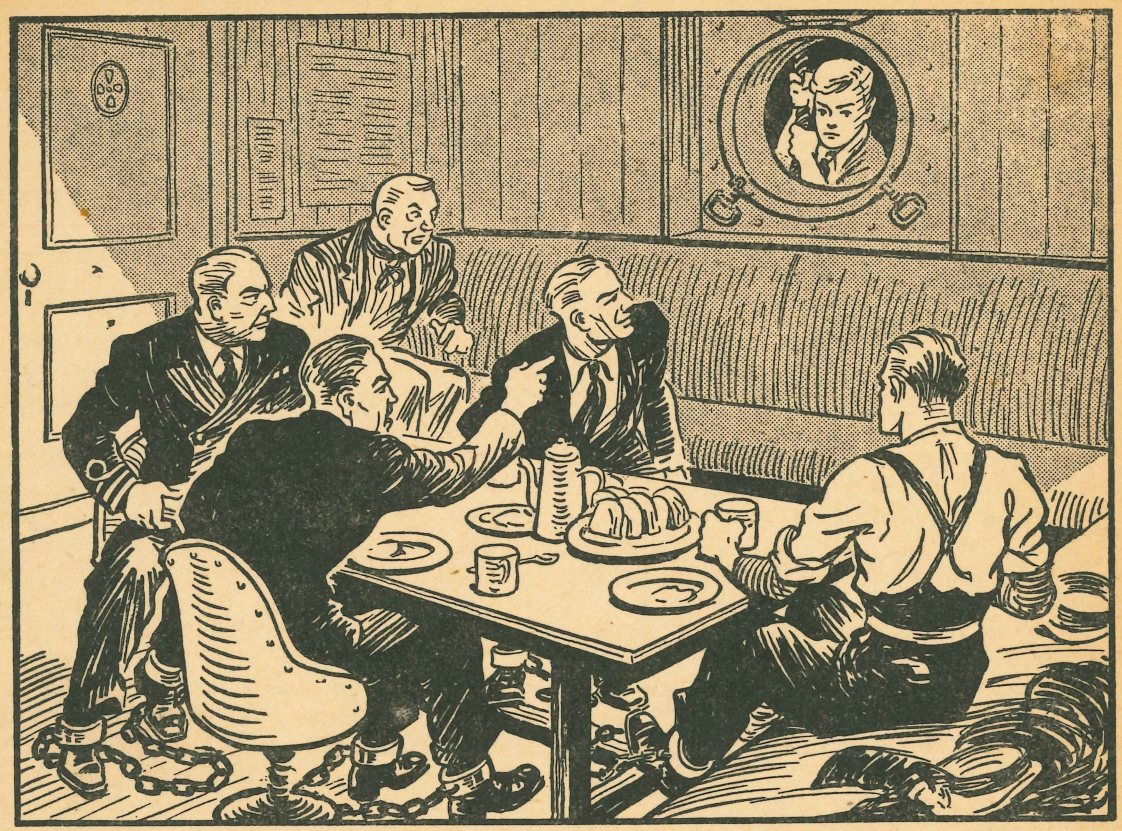
There seemed nothing to be done for the time being, except to make the best of things. Because they behaved well, they were allowed to move about pretty much as they liked, although they were advised to stay in the little cabin and have a sleep.

But after supper Tom went up on deck, and found that the Seadyke, a cargo steamer with the Dutch colours painted on her side, was heading eastward through the darkness of the North Sea which was now clear of fog.

Half the Seadyke's crew were resting, and the others busy on the look-out or other duties. Tom crept along the main deck below, but dodged in the half-open door of a store-room when he saw a sailor pacing slowly up and down, wearing a belt with a revolver stuck in it.

Tom watched and listened. The man appeared to be on sentry-go. Why was he there ? For what reason should he carry that gun ?

Voices began to be raised loudly from behind a door near where the sentry was standing. Presently the man unlocked the door, held the gun in his hand, and gave some gruff orders in a language that Tom supposed to be Dutch.



Clinging to a rope, Tom peered through the porthole and saw a number of men seated round a table. Every one of them had heavy chains on his legs.

Then Tom had an idea. He crept away and went up on deck again, having a clear idea in his mind of the position of that cabin. Making sure that no one was near, he tied a rope to the ship's rail and slithered over the side. A porthole was open, and, peering in, he saw a number of men seated round a table, eating a meal. Every one of them had heavy chains fixed to his legs!

The Perilous Plan!

"Hi! Hallo there!" said Tom breathlessly. "Can any of you speak English?"

The men looked round, uttered gasps of surprise at the sight of the boy's face peering in upon them, and scrambled to their feet. A man in a captain's uniform silenced them, and approached Tom at the porthole.

"Who vos you?" he demanded.

Tom told him how he and Pat had come to be aboard the Seadyke.

"Take care, English boy," warned the man. "Do you not know who we are? Here is der Dutch crew of der Seadyke—and I am Captain Hansden."

"You—you're the captain?" Tom gasped. "Why, when we came aboard, we saw the skipper, who——"

"Who is Lieutenant Kortz of der German Navy," the prisoner told him. "On der way to England, dis ship was captured by a U-boat. Kortz and some of der Germans came aboard and took our place, and we were made prisoners here because dere was no room for us in der submarine."

It appeared that the Seadyke had been on its way to Gravesend to pick up some gold bullion in payment for

cargoes which Captain Hansden had delivered previously. The Germans had discovered this and had put a crew of their own men aboard.

Keeping the real Captain Hansden and his men in captivity below decks, Kortz, the German lieutenant, had collected the gold.

" You can do nothing for us, boy," Hansden warned Tom. " Der Germans have a store of guns, and dis ship is to meet der U-boat again a hundred miles out to sea. Den der Seadyke is going mit der U-boat to Hamburg. Go now ! Der sentry may open der door and look in again."

Hastily Tom clambered back on deck in the darkness, and went back to Pat, whom he told of the amazing situation.

What could they do ? After talking together, they both crept out and closed the cabin door. But they saw an armed German on duty near the wireless room, so there was no chance of their sending out a warning by radio.

They were on their way below again when they saw Kortz outside the little cabin where they had been, and turning a key in the door. Obviously he thought they were still inside, and that he was locking them in, but they hid themselves and watched him go back to the bridge.

Sailors moved about the decks, but Kortz kept to the bridge during the night. It was a long and weary wait for Tom and Pat in the chill darkness, but at last they saw the dim forms of several ships in the distance. It was a convoy of trading ships westward bound for England, with two British destroyers to guard them ! Oh, if only they could signal to those warships !

" We've simply got to do something, Pat ! " Tom whispered ; " else we'll both be kept prisoners in Germany as long as the war lasts ! "

" Isn't there some way we can signal those destroyers ? " asked Pat.

" There may be some way of making a signal," Tom answered. " Captain Hansden told me that the Germans have some guns aboard, and they must be in that locked store-room I saw when I was having a spy round. You wait here. I'm going along to the captain's cabin to see if the key's there."

He crept along in the dark shadows and found that the cabin door was open. His heart beat fast as he groped into the gloom of the cabin and fumbled over a desk. At all costs, the Seadyke must be prevented from meeting the waiting U-boat and getting to Hamburg with the stolen gold !

Then his heart gave a bound. His fingers clasped over an electric torch lying on the desk, and he shaded the light with a handkerchief that he took from his pocket. His hopes rose still higher. The dimmed light showed a bunch of keys hanging on a rack, and he removed these quietly and made his way back to Pat again.

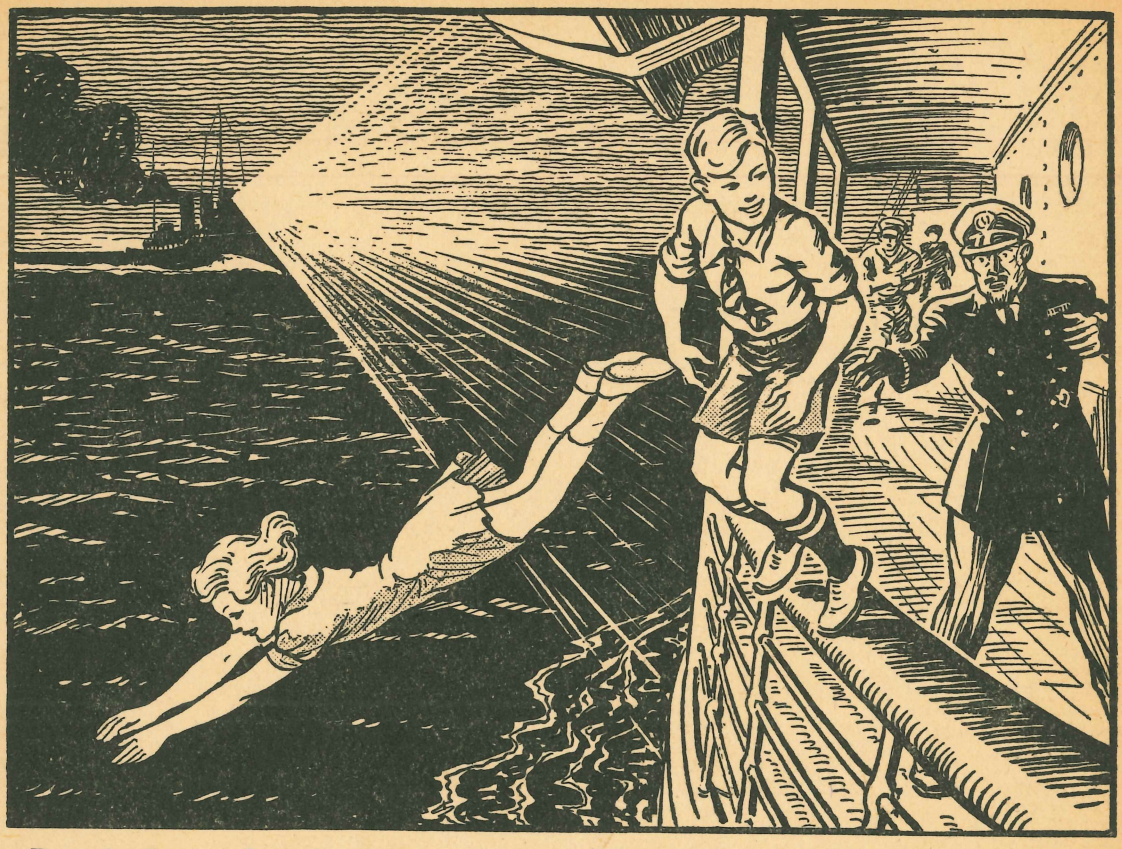
" I've got some keys, Pat," he whispered. " Hide over there, opposite to where that lifebelt is hanging. Before we're through, we may have to take to the water."

Tom intended to signal the distant destroyers, but he thought he might be able to dump the Germans' guns overboard, so that there would be very little possibility of anyone being hurt when the destroyers drew alongside.

Crouching down by the store-room door, Tom tried one key after another. His hand trembled in his anxiety in case he was discovered before he could succeed in opening it. Overhead he heard the slow tramp of boots where a German sailor was on watch.

Tom had almost given up hope when the lock clicked as he tried yet another key. Stepping through the doorway, he shone the torch into the store and saw machine-guns, rifles and ammunition, including a number of small hand grenades or bombs. These were fitted with safety " pins," and he knew that if you pulled out the pin, the bomb would explode within a few seconds. He helped himself to a couple of these grenades and switched off the torch.

Another and more desperate idea had occurred to him. Armed with these grenades, he could not only destroy the



Bravely Pat took a header into the sea. Tom followed her just as Kortz, the crafty German officer, made a grab at him.

German guns and ammunition, but also stop the ship !

Not far away lay the small compartment in which was the steering engine. No one was on guard there, and with trembling fingers, Tom pulled the pin from one of the bombs and dropped the thing inside.

As he darted back towards the firearms store, he glimpsed a faint yellow streak in the eastern sky. Before long it would be daylight, and there were the two warships dead abreast of the Seadyke.

Tom released the pin from the second bomb, rolled it inside the store and shut the door hurriedly. At his own reckoning he had no more than a second or two left before the explosion of the first bomb.

Panting, he dashed for the shelter of a small hatchway and flung himself down beside Pat, who was crouching there. Hardly was he flattened on the deck when there was a thunderous explosion.

CRASH ! The first bomb exploded in the steering-gear, and the stricken Seadyke swung from her course.

Kortz roared frantically from the bridge ; the German sailors shouted and ran down to the main deck.

CRASH !

A second and more fearful explosion shook the ship as all the bombs went off at once in the firearms store. Machine-guns and rifles were shattered ; the store-room door burst out in fragments amidst a blast of flame and smoke.

Tom and Pat crouched side by side. All was babel and confusion aboard the Seadyke. A number of the Germans were dashing to the lifeboats, thinking

the ship had struck a mine and was going to sink. And above the uproar rose the voice of Kortz, bellowing orders in German.

" Look, Pat ! " gasped Tom. " One of those British destroyers is turning this way. We've got to jump overboard and take our chance ! "

The destroyer was cutting through the North Sea at racing speed. Her searchlight cut the darkness in a brilliant lane of white that picked out the Seadyke like a ship made of silver.

Kortz, the German lieutenant, came running from the bridge.

Tom flung the lifebelt overboard and helped his sister on to the rail.

" Quick, Pat—dive in ! " he panted. Bravely Pat straightened herself and took a header into the sea.

Tom followed her just in time as Kortz made a grab at him.

Rising to the surface, Tom swam to Pat, who was clinging to the lifebelt, and Kortz, who was blinded by the searchight's glare, was unable to see them.

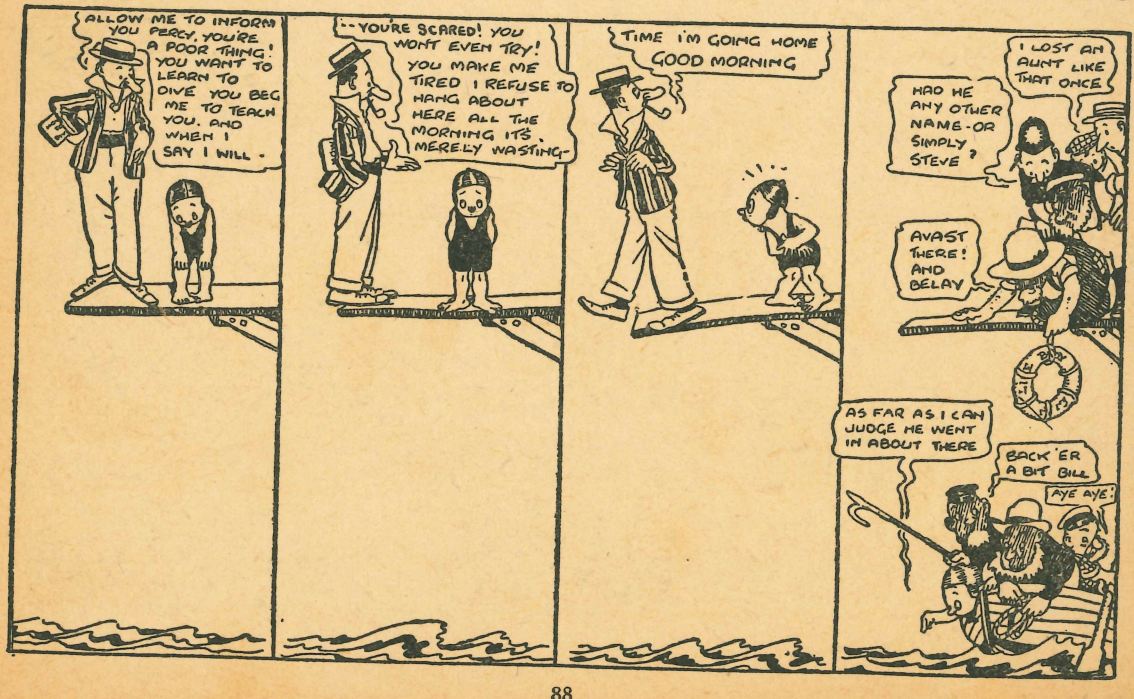
At high speed the British destroyer arrived on the scene. A boat was lowered and Tom and Pat were picked up, and within another couple of minutes they had told their amazing adventure to the commanding officer.

Under the guns of the destroyer, Kortz and the other Germans had no choice but to surrender. They were transferred as prisoners to the warship, and Captain Hansden and the Dutch crew were released to take command again of their own vessel.

So in triumph Tom and Pat were taken back to England, and you can imagine the wonderful welcome they had from their Dad and Mum who had quite given them up for lost !

THE END

PERCY AND STEVE . . . THE SPORTY FUN-MAKERS


ALLOW ME TO INFORM YOU PERCY, YOU'RE A POOR THING! YOU WANT TO LEARN TO DIVE YOU BEG ME TO TEACH YOU. AND WHEN I SAY I WILL -
--YOU'RE SCARED! YOU WON'T EVEN TRY! YOU MAKE ME TIRED I REFUSE TO HANG ABOUT HERE ALL THE MORNING IT'S MERELY WASTING-
TIME I'M GOING HOME GOOD MORNING
I LOST AN AUNT LIKE THAT ONCE
HAD HE ANY OTHER NAME-OR SIMPLY STEVE ?
AVAST THERE! AND BELAY
AS FAR AS I CAN JUDGE HE WENT IN ABOUT THERE
BACK 'ER A BIT BILL
AYE AYE!

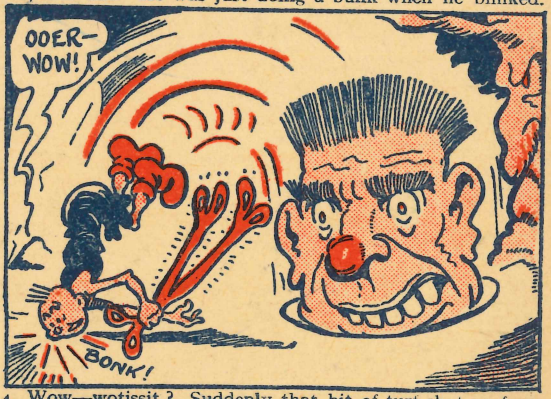
PERKY PARKER'S PET SHOW

STONEHENGE KIT — THE ANCIENT BRIT.

1. Kit is after the magic braces that were bagged from King Kongo by wicked Whizzy. He's had nothing but hold-ups and let-downs, too! That's what braces are for, sez you, but I mean that Kit has landed in lots o' bits o' bother.

2. The biggest bit o' bother was when he landed into Whizzy's magic wood. Would you believe it, chums, but the trees were all nasty-looking bits o' work that tried to cop our Kit. He was just doing a bunk when he blinked.

3. There were the magic braces hanging from the branch of a really nasty bit of tree. Kit branched off on another path to grab them, but he was barking up the wrong tree. That bit of turf he trod on meant trouble for our hero.

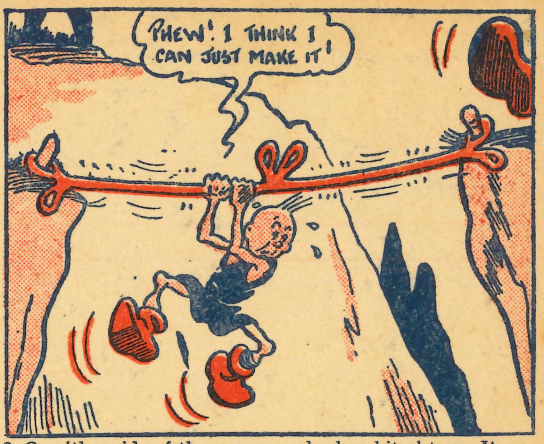


4. Wow—wotissit? Suddenly that bit of turf shot up from the ground like a lift! But it wasn't turf at all, see? It was the head of Grasshead the giant, and he didn't like Stonehenge Kit tickling his topknot with his tootsies.

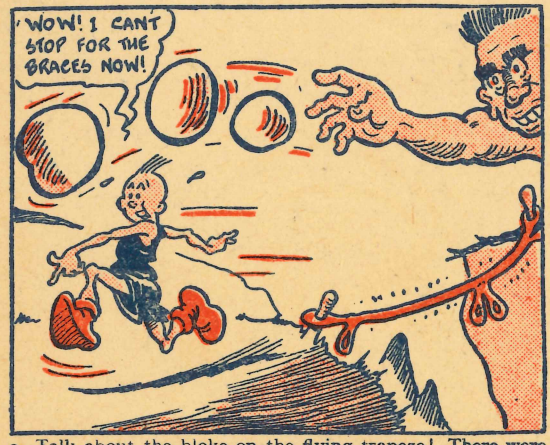
5. Woomph! Kit took a header from the giant's head, and tore a chunk out of the ground as he landed on his toothy-pegs. But our hero still had the magic braces, so he buzzed off as fast as his size sixes could take him.

6. BOOMPH! BOOMPH! BOOMPH! Grasshead's corn-coverers didn't half make the ground shake as he chased Stonehenge Kit. Our hero got a furlong in the lead, but not for long. Suddenly he came to a big gap in the ground.

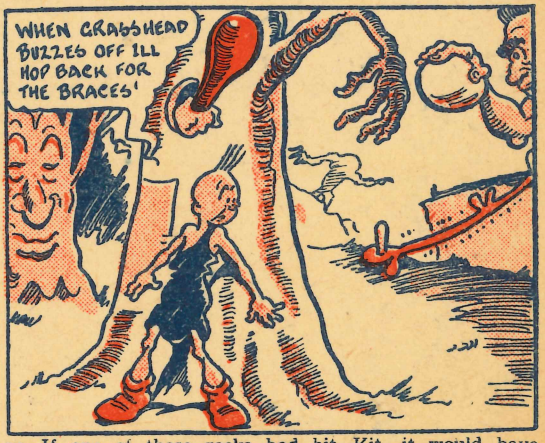
7. Kit gasped as he saw that gap. The sound of Grasshead, the giant, behind him nearly made him jump out of his skin with fright—but the jump wasn't enough to carry him over the gap. Then our bright Brit had a bright idea.



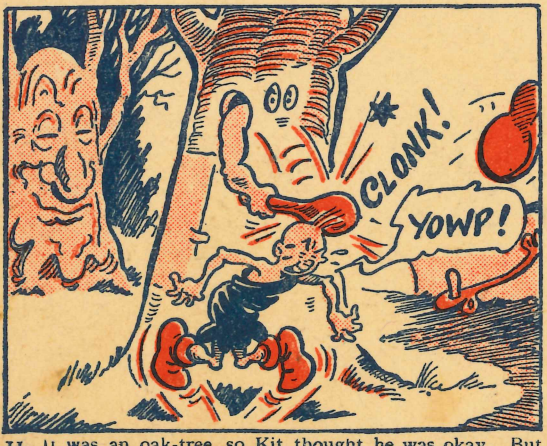
8. On either side of the gap was a broken bit o' tree. It was a lucky break for Stonehenge Kit—the stumps saved him from being stumped, now. He bunged one end of the braces over the gap and fixed t'other end to t'other bit of tree.



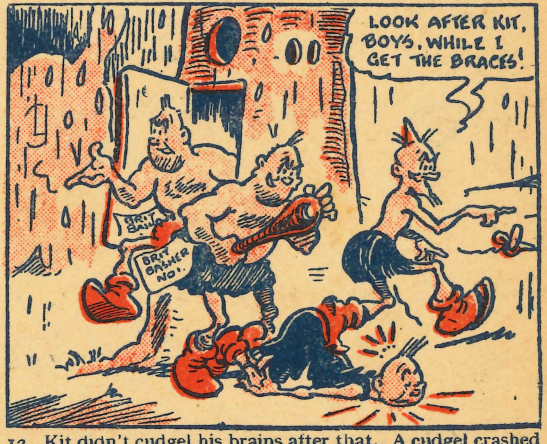
9. Talk about the bloke on the flying trapeze! There were no flies on our Kit, either. Hand over fist he flew across the braces. He beat Grasshead by a short head, but the nasty giant began bunging huge chunks of rocks at him.



10. If one of those rocks had hit Kit, it would have rocked him to sleep for a fortnight. He had to bunk without the magic braces, and brace himself against an outsize in trees for shelter from Grasshead's pot-shots.



11. It was an oak-tree, so Kit thought he was okay. But that wood belonged to wicked Whizzy, and he couldn't half make those trees do tricks with his magic. Kit was wondering how he could get the braces back when—BONK!



12. Kit didn't cudgel his brains after that. A cudgel crashed down on his coconut. Our bright Brit hit the ground and went out like a light. Then out of the tree tripped Whizzy and his Britbashers. Now follow them to page 122, chums.

BILLY BUNTER

THE FATTEST SCHOOLBOY ON EARTH

THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING US TO CAMP IN YOUR MEADOW, FARMER GILES!
THAT BE ALL RIGHT, MR. QUELCH - BUT I DON'T WANT ANY BOYS FISHING IN MY RIVER, OR YOU'LL HAVE TO GO!

1. "Oho, and a-camping we will go!" chirruped the cheery chaps of Greyfriars when Mr. Quelch took them into the country. Billy Bunter chortled. He was so happy that he didn't hear what old Farmer Giles was saying to Quelchy.

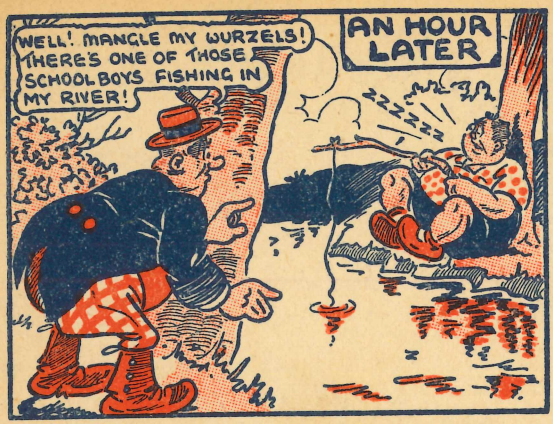
2. Why was the fat lad so happy? Because there were no school lessons at camp. More important still, the grub wasn't so well locked up as it was at school! That made it easier for Billy to snaffle a snack when he wanted one.

3. And Billy Bunter was always wanting a snack! But he got a shock instead of a snack when Quelchy said that the grub hadn't arrived at the camp yet. The fat lad felt quite faint, until he suddenly had a first class brain-wave.

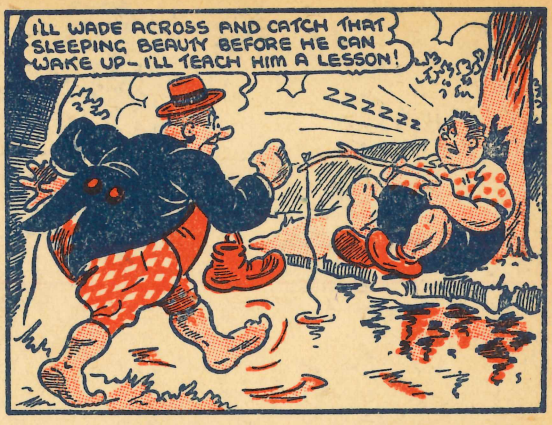
4. He would go fishing! Grabbing a rod, Billy galloped for the river—and that was the very thing that the boys were supposed not to do. But Bunter didn't know anything about that. If there were fish there, it was sufficient for him.

5. Billy's rod was a tree branch, but it was oak-kay with him. The hook was far too small for the fish he hoped to catch, so he fixed a mouse-trap on to the end of the line to make sure. Billy didn't believe in doing things by halves.

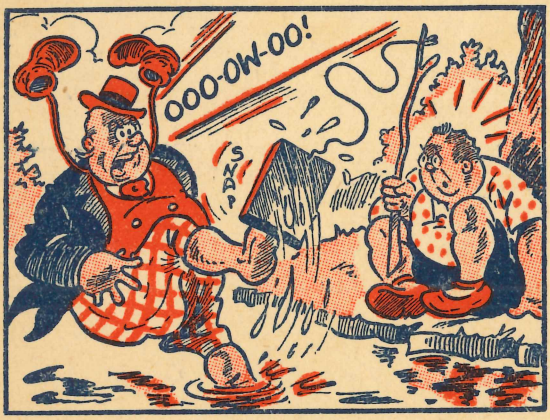
6. The fat lad had heard of cat fish, but he hoped to catch a haddock with his mouse-trap. Chortling, he swung his line in the air and cast the trap into the water—Billy could hear that haddock sizzling in the frying-pan already.



7. But the tiddlers thought there was something fishy about that trap. They weren't going to be caught by hook or by crook—or by Billy Bunter's wheeze either. They sheered off, and the fat lad waited so long he fell fast asleep.



8. Billy was dreaming of a haddock as big as a house when along came Farmer Giles. He thought he was dreaming, too, when he saw that a fat boy from Greyfriars had actually dared to fish in his private part of the river.

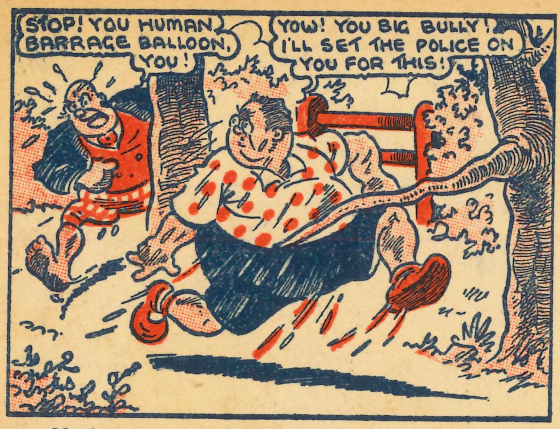


9. Farmer Giles growled with wrath and felt like wading into the fat lad there and then. But he had to wade across the river first, so off came his corn-coverers and into the wet-stuff he went and toddled across the river.

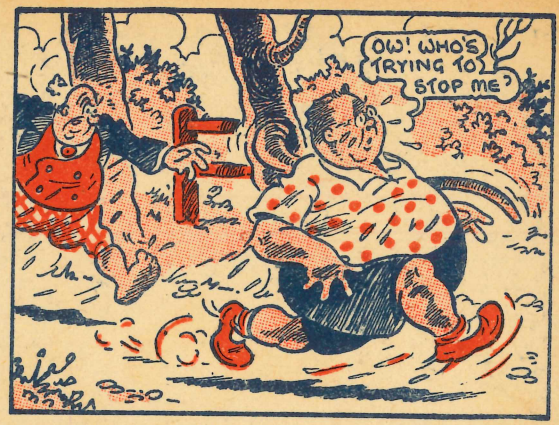
10. The farmer had meant to catch Bunter napping, but got caught himself. CLICK! Billy awoke with a start, thinking he had clicked for a catch. Then he goggled as he saw that his fish trap had got Farmer Giles by the toes.

11. It was hard lines on the farmer and, howling, he grabbed Bunter's line. He pulled, then Billy pulled. It was a tug-o'-war for two ticks, then—oopsidaisy!—over into the wet-stuff fell the fat lad—right on top of the farmer.

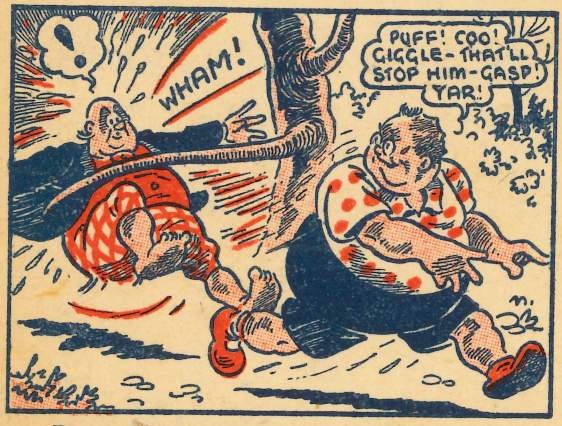
12. SPLASH! There was so much of Billy Bunter that the river overflowed its banks. By this time Farmer Giles was overflowing with fury at the fat lad, but Bunter didn't give him the chance to do anything about it.



13. Moving faster than he'd ever done, Bunter scrambled up the bank for safety. But Farmer Giles wasn't letting him get away as easy as that. Bawling like one of his bulls, the farmer came following after him at full speed.



14. Billy Bunter would have been caught, too, if he hadn't branched off through the wood. There was a branch sticking out, and Bunter's huge bulk bent it back as he passed. But the farmer had something coming to him!



15. Farmer Giles had meant to get his own back on Bunter. He got his own back all right when the branch of the tree came whizzing back. Whang! The branch caught him right on the place where he kept his bread-and-cheese!

16. It was a nasty smack, too! Giles had been coming along at the double, and now he doubled up as the branch bonked him a hefty biff. Billy Bunter had got the farmer's goat worse than ever now. And was he mad!

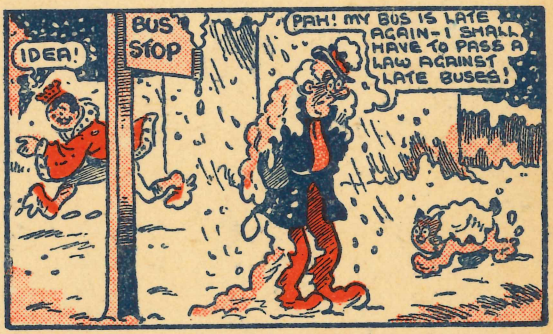
17. Tearing the branch from the tree, Farmer Giles charged into the Greyfriars camp breathing fire and slaughter. Quelchy was bending down, busily engaged in opening a tin of beans.

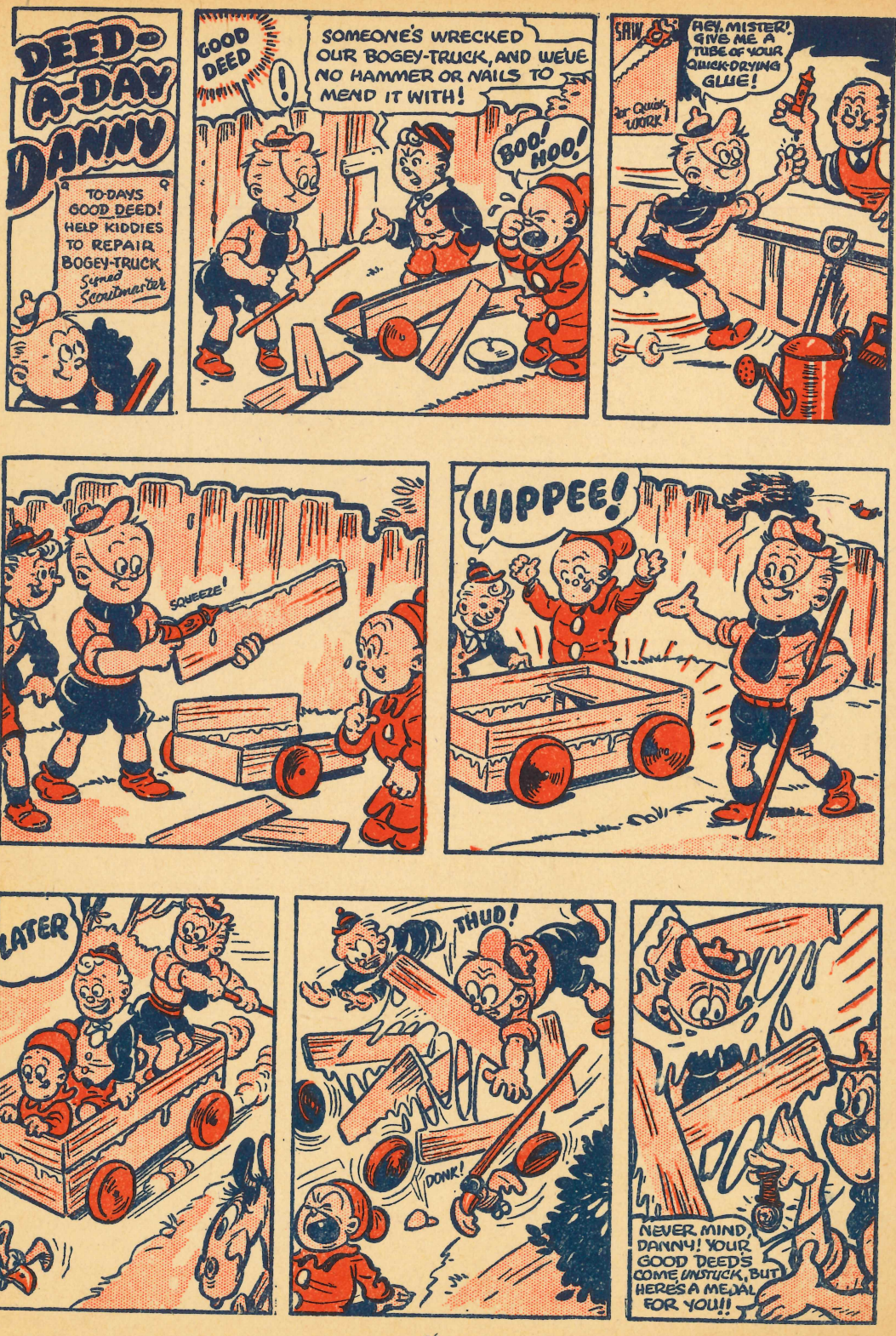
GO ON-HOPPIT, THE LOT OF YOU! OFF MY LAND!
WHEN WE REACH THE SCHOOL, BUNTER-WE WILL LOOK INTO THIS HEM-AFFAIR WITH THE AID OF MY-HEM-CANE!
SOCS

18. The master got beans all right—from Farmer Giles with the branch. After giving Quelchy a hiding, Giles gave everybody the order of the boot off his land. This landed Bunter into trouble with everybody. And now he can't have a feed of fish without feeling fed-up!

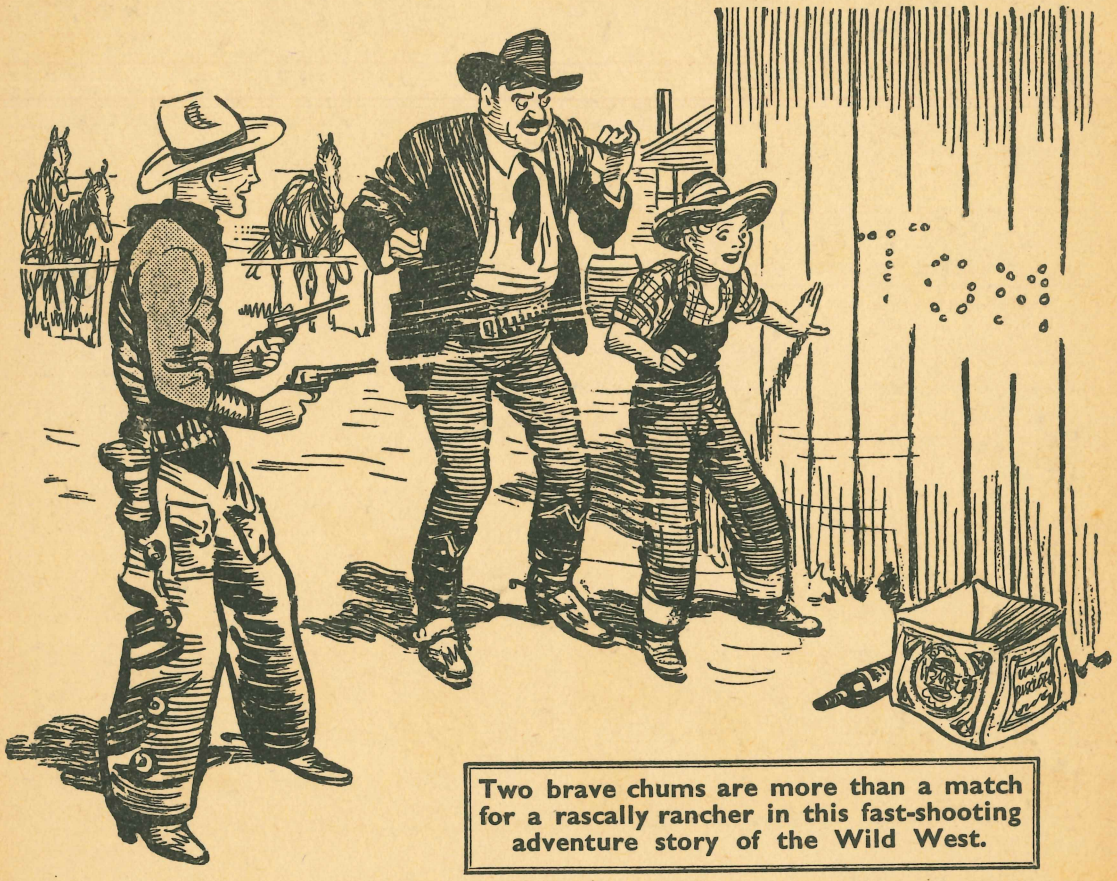
KIDDO THE BOY KING
AND HIS POSH PRIME MINISTER

BAH! BUILDING SNOWMEN INDEED! I'M SURPRISED AT YOUR MAJESTY- I SHALL PASS A LAW AGAINST SNOW-MEN, SNOW-WOMEN AND SNOW-KIDS- ESPECIALLY UGLY ONES LIKE THIS!




DEED-A-DAY DANNY
TO-DAYS GOOD DEED! HELP KIDDIES TO REPAIR BOGEY-TRUCK
Signed Scoutmaster
GOOD DEED
SOMEONE'S WRECKED OUR BOGEY-TRUCK, AND WE'VE NO HAMMER OR NAILS TO MEND IT WITH!
BOO! HOO!
SAW
HEY, MISTER! GIVE ME A TUBE OF YOUR QUICK-DRYING GLUE!
QUICK WORK!
SQUEEZE!
YIPPEE!
LATER
THUD!
DONK!
NEVER MIND, DANNY! YOUR GOOD DEED'S COME UNSTUCK, BUT HERE'S A MEDAL FOR YOU!!

LONG TOM AND LITTLE JACK



Two brave chums are more than a match for a rascally rancher in this fast-shooting adventure story of the Wild West.

The Lone Star Ranch.

JACK KITCHENER and his pal Tom Brody stepped out of the train and looked around them. They had just arrived in the cowboy town of Sundown, in Texas.

Jack's uncle owned a ranch five miles from Sundown, and had sent for his nephew to come out to him from England. Tom Brody was Jack's best pal, and they had decided to come out together.

Jack was a short, cheery little fellow, with a round, smiling face, and eyes that sparkled with life. His pal was long and lanky, and had a dreamy look in his eyes. But his brain was just as active as Jack's.

As they looked around the little station they saw an elderly man coming towards them. He was of a huge size, with a face that looked jolly, in spite of its wrinkles. He was dressed in a check shirt and buckskin trousers.

"Howdy, young 'uns!" he said in a booming voice. "I reckon you must be the kids for the Lone Star Ranch, eh?"

"Yes," Jack replied. "I'm Jack Kitchener, and this is my pal Tom Brody."

The man looked curiously at the dreamy Tom. Then he turned to Jack.

"I'm your uncle's foreman," he said. "Hank Haggerty's the name. You'd better call me Hank, as all the others do.

Little Jack.

I reckon you'll see plenty o' life out here, kids, and old Iron Kitch is mighty anxious to see you. Come on, fellers. I got the buggy waiting outside."

Hank led the way out of the station, where an old four-wheeled wagon was waiting. They climbed up into it, and in a short time they were rolling along the dusty roads.

Old Hank was a chatty old fellow, and kept them interested in his yarns about the Wild West. At last, when he paused for breath, Jack managed to get a word in.

" How is my uncle, Hank ? " he asked.

Hank shook his head sorrowfully.

" Old Iron Kitch's riding days are over, son," he said. " I reckon old Kitch has been and worked himself out. He's mighty sick jest now. He's a grand feller, too. But say, I'm getting sorrowful-like, and that ain't no good for fellers out here."

" What kind of a ranch has uncle got ? " Jack asked. " Is it a large one ? "

" It was once," Hank replied. " But it's gone to nothing since old Iron's been laid up."

" Why do you call him Iron ? " Jack asked curiously.

Hank laughed loudly.

" Well, son, I reckon we calls him that because he's as tough as iron. There ain't no man in the West yet that's been able to crush Iron Bob Kitchener, and there's a good many who've had a try."

" Is there anyone else at the ranch, except you and uncle ? "

" There's Miss Nancy—that's old Kitch's daughter," replied Hank. " I reckon you'll like her. Doggone me, I never saw such a fine gal in all me life. Well, youngsters, there's the ranch."

They had come in sight of a cluster of buildings, and in a few minutes the buggy had come to a stop outside the ranch house.

A fair young woman was standing at the door. She was dressed in a riding outfit. Her face had a healthy tan, and she smiled pleasantly. This was Nancy Kitchener, Jack's cousin. She greeted Jack and Tom warmly.

" I'm so glad you've arrived safely," she said. " Daddy and I have been looking forward to this for a long time now. I'm sure you'll like it here."

Jack and Tom felt they were going to like this open, pleasant-faced girl. She took them up to see her father at once.

The two boys saw a thin, rugged-faced man lying in a bed. His hair was grey. Although he looked ill, Jack and Tom could see by his face that he had once been a strong man, both in body and mind. This was " Iron " Kitch, the rancher who had held his own against some of the toughest men in the West. His eyes lit up eagerly when he saw Jack.

" Howdy, son ? " he said in a weak voice. " It's good to see you."

" I'm glad to see you too, uncle," Jack replied earnestly. " This is my pal Tom Brody. We've both come out here, as you asked, and we're going to do all we can to help you."

" Sure, my boy," smiled Jack's uncle. " I know you will. You've got the Kitchener blood in you. They're all fighters, and your dad was one before you." He stopped for a few moments, and then went on :

" Now listen, my boys, while I tell you the position out here. You've got a tough job in front of you. I'm afraid

my days of fighting and struggling are over. That's why I sent for you. This is one of the richest ranches in this part of the West, because these lands are rich in oil. Your cousin Nancy and old Hank Haggerty have had to keep things going, and it has worried me. There's one man you've got to watch. That's Jasper Judd. He owns a ranch near by. I know that he's keen on getting this ranch, and he's doing everything he can to try to make me sell. Be careful of him, boys. He's made up his mind to get this ranch, and he's a dangerous man."

" Don't you worry, uncle," Jack burst out. " I'll be watching for him once I get to know him. Gee—I'm anxious to start work, uncle. Aren't you, Tom? "

The dreamy-eyed Tom nodded.

" Whatever you say, pal," he murmured.

Iron Kitch smiled. Long Tom, as he was often called, looked a weary, useless sort of chap. But Iron Kitch could read men. Underneath all this weariness, he could see that Tom was just as fearless as Jack, and he felt proud of them both.

Fast Shooting!

A WEEK went by and Jack and Tom had settled down to life on the ranch. There were not many cowboys on the Lone Star now, but what few there were seemed very decent fellows. They all had a great respect for Hank Haggerty. Old Hank was a jolly fellow. He liked a bit of fun, but work came first always.

Hank's whole life was wrapped up in the Lone Star Ranch. He took Jack and Tom in hand at once and started showing them all round the ranch. The first thing he taught them was how to use a gun.

" I reckon you'll be wanting to know that first thing," he said. " There's such a lot of bad fellows hereabouts that it ain't safe for a guy to go about unless he's got his shooting irons."

Old Hank was a wizard with a gun. So keen were the lads to learn that they were able to make quite a good show by the end of the first day. Old Hank chuckled.

" Doggone me," he said, " I've never seen such cute youngsters. I reckon you'll be making the sheriff scared o' you mighty soon. Heh, heh."

Cousin Nancy had told Tom and Jack what a faithful old chap Hank had been. He wasn't afraid of anyone or anything. Those people who knew him, knew better than to start any trouble with him.

One morning Hank took Jack and Tom out to the cattle range. He was going to show them how to mend wire fences. They had a very busy morning, and just before noon Hank left them to finish off the job while he went back to attend to other work.

Jack and Tom soon finished their job and got ready to return to the ranch house. They were outside a little log range cabin when they saw a man coming towards them. He was tall and very smartly dressed in riding clothes. The two lads stared as he approached them.

" I wonder who this is ? " Jack asked. " I don't remember seeing him before."

Tom eyed the man dreamily.

When he reached the cabin, the man stopped. His pale blue eyes stared keenly at Jack and Tom, and there was a smile on his lips. It was a smile that neither Jack nor Tom liked very much.

" Well, well," he said in a soft, purring voice. " I suppose you are the two lads who have come to stay at the Lone

Old Hank.

Star, eh? Which of you is old Kitch's nephew?"

"I am," Jack replied. "But I'm afraid I don't know you."

He didn't like this man's manner at all. The silky voiced man laughed.

"That's soon settled," he replied. "My name's Jasper Judd. I dare say you have heard of me, eh?"

Jack gave him a cold look. So this was Jasper Judd, the man his uncle had warned him against. Well, he was just as he had imagined him to be—smooth-tongued and sneering.

"Yes," Jack replied quietly. "I've heard of you."

"That's good. I've just come from the Lone Star. Old Kitch told me that you had come. Says he's going to train you to take over the ranch when he's gone. Now, listen, youngsters, you did a very foolish thing in coming out here."

"Why?" Jack asked.

"Your uncle will never be able to save the Lone Star. It's doomed. I've offered to buy it from him—out of kindness, of course—but he's refused. If you think there's any chance of making the Lone Star a rich ranch again, you're making a big mistake. Iron Kitch has too many enemies, and they'll crush him. Now, if you like, I'll give you and your pal a good job on my ranch—the Double Spur. You'll never do any good here, and I'll pay you well."

"Thank you, Mr. Judd," Jack replied, his face red with anger. "I came out here to help my uncle and so did my pal here. I don't care how many enemies my uncle's got. We'll get the ranch going again, as soon as I've had more experience. My uncle is game, even if he has got to keep to his bed."

Jasper Judd laughed softly and dropped his hand to a Colt gun which he wore strapped to his thigh. There was a sneering smile on his lips.

"Very brave words," he replied. "But out here, actions mean more than words. Why, you're only kids. You've got to be smart with a gun, sonny boy. Remember that when you talk about getting the ranch going."

Before he could say another word, Long Tom had drawn his own twin guns like lightning, and there came the whip-like cracks of exploding bullets.

Surrounded with smoke, Tom shoved his guns back in their holsters as the shots echoed across the range.

"That's what *we* call shooting, Mr. Judd," he drawled slowly.

Jasper Judd stared with unbelieving eyes at the wall of the log cabin where bullet holes formed the name "TOM." Jack's lanky pal had shot his name in the logs.

The three of them turned round sharply at the sound of a withered chuckle. Standing beside them was old Hank, who had come to see where the lads were.

'Heh, heh, heh! I reckon you guys been introducing yourselves, eh? Dog-gone my hide, you'd better be careful, Judd. Them boys can use their shooting irons. Heh, heh, heh."

A dark look came over Jasper Judd's face. There was still a smile on his lips, but there was a bitter look in his eyes.

"O.K., smart guys," he said, in a quiet voice. "I'll be seeing you again." And he strode away across the fields.

All the way back to the ranch house Hank was chuckling.

"I reckon you two youngsters have sure showed what you're made of," he told them. "You've called that feller's bluff. Dang me, old Iron will be mighty proud o' you."

Turning The Tables.

JASPER JUDD arrived at his ranch in a cold rage. Jack and Tom had made him look very foolish, and Judd was not the kind of man to stand that.

He sent for his foreman, a man named Ike Blanton, who was as ruthless as Judd himself. They were both a pair of scheming villains, and they were anxious to get hold of the Lone Star Ranch.

"Look here, Ike," Judd said. "We've got to get busy. Iron Kitch's nephew has arrived along with his pal. I thought at first I'd be able to get around them, but they're as obstinate as Iron Kitch himself."

Crouching behind a tree, Little Jack peered cautiously round. A low gasp escaped his lips as he saw the mysterious rider flashing a torch in the direction of Lone Star Valley.

Judd then told Ike of his meeting with Jack and Tom.

" Those kids are going to be dangerous," he went on. " They've learned how to handle a gun already. If they get a hold on the ranch, we're done for. Now listen, Ike ; I want that ranch of Iron Kitch's. We've got to act at once."

" O.K., boss," Ike said. " I'm ready for anything."

" Good ! Now, Ike, you remember those cattle that were missing from Slim Duggan's ranch ? "

" Sure, boss, I do. They were stolen—rustled, but nobody ever thought it was us who rustled 'em. We were mighty cute, eh ? "

Judd nodded.

" Well, Ike, I'm going to plant those cattle on the Lone Star," he grinned.

Ike gave a coarse chuckle.

" Well, hog tie me, boss, if that ain't a cute notion," he replied.

" In the early hours of morning," Judd went on, " say about two o'clock, we'll drive those cattle into the Lone Star range. Then I'll go and tell Slim Duggan where they are. That'll put the finishing touch to Iron Kitch. He'll be branded as a cattle thief. He'll be hounded out of Sundown, and that proud daughter of his with him. Then I'll be able to get the ranch. What do you think of the idea, Ike ? "

" I think it's great, boss. I'm ready as soon as you say the word."

" O.K., Ike, we'll start at one in the morning."

. . . .

Long Tom and Little Jack pulled up their horses sharply in the darkness. They had been to an outlying part of the range in search of a calf that had strayed.

Suddenly they spotted two or three torch flashes from just beyond a clump of trees

" There's somebody over there signalling for some reason or other," whispered Jack to his lanky pal. " Wait here with the horses while I go and find out who it is."

Before Tom could stop him, the plucky boy had slipped silently to the ground and was creeping towards the trees.

Crouching behind a tree, Jack peered cautiously round. A low gasp escaped his lips as he saw an evil-looking man astride a horse, flashing a torch in the direction of the Lone Star valley. It was Ike Blanton.

Every now and then he shielded the torch with his hat, and it was obvious to Jack that the mysterious rider was up to no good.

And then there came the sound of cattle being driven down in the valley, and Ike Blanton gave a low chuckle and pocketed his torch.

As he did so, another rider edged his horse from the shadow of the trees and joined Ike.

" Everything O.K.? " Jack heard Jasper Judd's voice inquire.

Ike laughed evilly.

" Yeah, boss," he answered. " We've got Iron Kitch where we want him now. Our two cowboys have just driven those stolen cattle on to the Lone Star range. They've all got Slim Duggan's brand on them, and I guess Iron Kitch will have a job to explain that."

Jasper Judd nodded.

" Well, I'm going over to Slim Duggan's place now, to tell him where his cattle are. We must get him over to the Lone Star range before anyone else sees the cattle."

With that, the two riders jerked their horses round and galloped away.

Jack dashed back to Tom and quickly told him all that he had heard.

Tom eyed his pal dreamily for a few moments and then grinned.

" All right, Jack," he smiled. " I've got an idea. We'll give those chaps a taste of their own medicine."

" What do you mean, Tom? " asked Jack as he mounted his horse.

" Just this," replied his chum. " We'll drive Slim Duggan's cattle over to Jasper Judd's ranch. Then when Duggan comes, we'll tell him where to find them."

Jack laughed excitedly, and, urging their horses forward, the two raced for the Lone Star valley.

In a short time they had the cattle off the Lone Star range and headed for Jasper Judd's ranch. They had to be careful now. If they met anyone, it would upset their plans.

But luck was with them. Not a soul was about, and the stolen cattle were soon on Jasper Judd's land, quite close to his ranch house.

It was unlikely that anyone would look there before morning, and when they had finished they went back to their horses, feeling that they had done a good job.

. . . . .

Old Hank was awakened by a loud banging on the ranch house door.

" Doggone me," he growled as he got out of bed. " Who's making that all-fired row? 'Tain't sun-up yet."

He dressed himself and lit a lantern, and went to the door. Three men stood in the doorway Hank blinked at them.

" What the dickens do you guys mean by all this row? " he demanded.

One of the men stepped forward. Hank recognised him as Simon Lee, the sheriff of Sundown.

" I reckon we're sorry to bother you, Hank," the sheriff said " But Slim Duggan here has had some of his cattle stolen. Someone told him that they were on your range."

" Why, you ding-swizzled old son of a ——"

" Hold on, Hank," interrupted Duggan, coming forward. " We don't aim to argue. Show us over your range, and that'll settle the matter."

By this time Nancy and Jack and Tom were on the scene. Nancy's face was white, but there was a firm look in her eyes.

" You won't find any stolen cattle on this ranch, Mr. Duggan," she said.

Slim Duggan went very red and turned the other way.

They all went down to the corrals, while Hank told them all in plain language what he thought of them. As he expected, the corrals were empty. They searched the whole ranch, but only a few cattle with the Lone Star brand could be found.

" What did I tell you ? " Hank snorted. " Doggone it, I've a good mind to set on ye with my guns."

" I think you'll find your cattle on Jasper Judd's land, Mr. Duggan," Jack said quietly. All eyes were turned on Jack.

" In fact," he continued, " I happen to know he's got stolen cattle there. I've seen them."

" Come on," Hank yelled. " What are you galoots standing there for ? I always said Jasper Judd was a no-good."

In a few minutes they were all riding hard towards Judd's ranch. They rode up to the ranch just as he was letting himself into the house.

" What's the meaning of this ? " he demanded, but no one was listening to him just then. Suddenly there was a shout from behind the ranch house.

" Here they are. We've found 'em," roared the sheriff.

A few minutes later Jasper Judd was surrounded by angry men. Old Hank poked a gun into Jasper Judd's ribs.

" Listen to me, feller," he said. " By rights you ought to be plugged for monkeying with other men's cattle. Dang my hide—if I catches you anywhere near the Lone Star after this, I'm liable to get mad."

A few moments later Jasper Judd and Ike Blanton were taken away by the sheriff.

That afternoon Jack and Tom were praised by Iron Kitch.

" Well done, lads," he said. " I can feel easier in mind now you're here. I'm proud of you and your pal. You're a real Kitchener, Jack. What do you say, Hank ? "

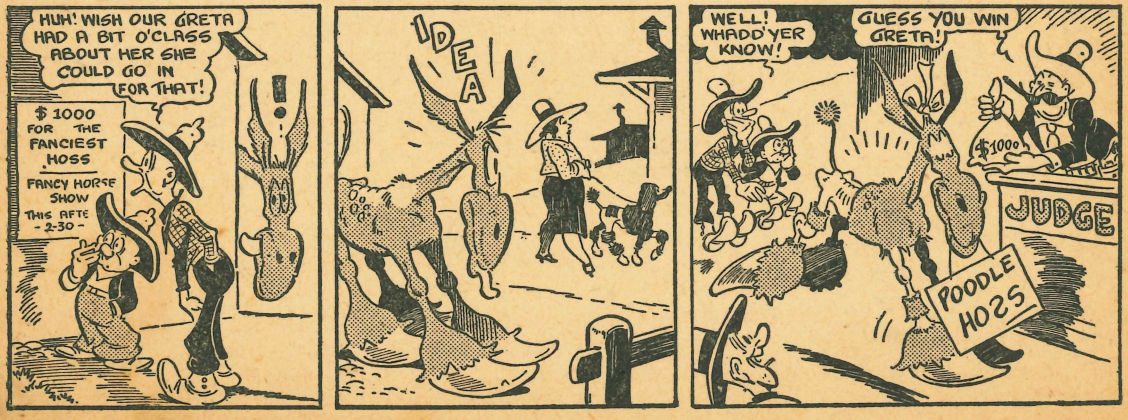
Old Hank's rugged face was beaming.

" You said it, boss," he replied. " I reckon we'll be having another Iron Kitch here, one o' these days, eh ? Heh, heh, heh."

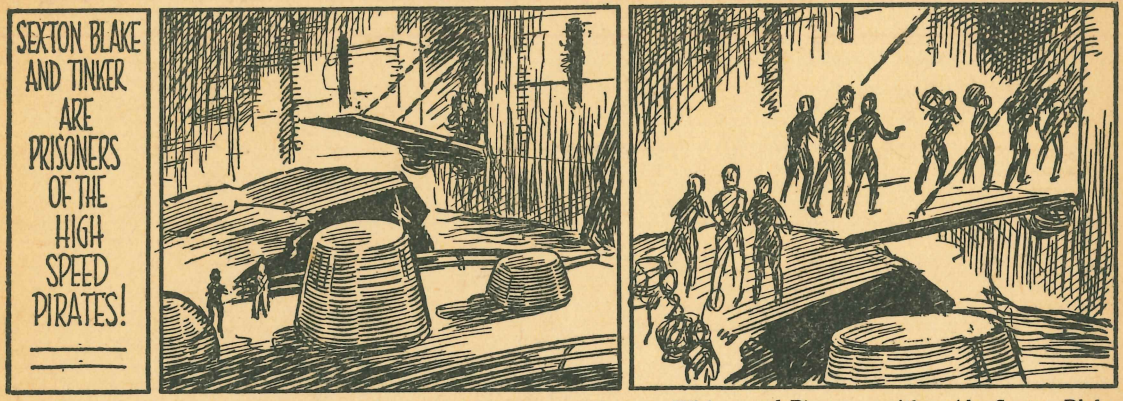
Iron Kitchener smiled grimly. He knew old Hank was right.

THE END

MIKE, SPIKE AND GRETA . . A WINNER ALL THE WAY!

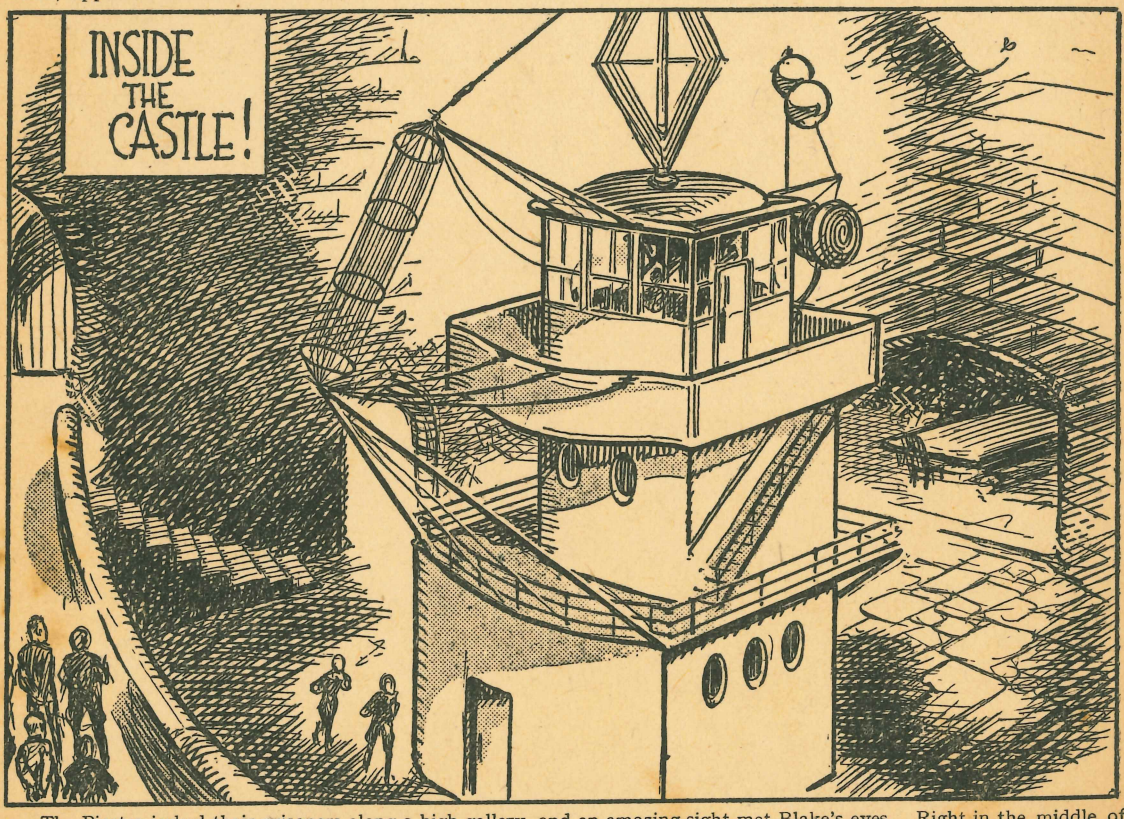

HUH! WISH OUR GRETA HAD A BIT O'CLASS ABOUT HER SHE COULD GO IN FOR THAT!
$1000 FOR THE FANCIEST HOSS
FANCY HORSE SHOW THIS AFTE - 2-30 -
IDEA
WELL! WHADD'YER KNOW!
GUESS YOU WIN GRETA!
$1000
JUDGE
POODLE HOSS

SEXTON BLAKE AND THE HIGH-SPEED PIRATES.

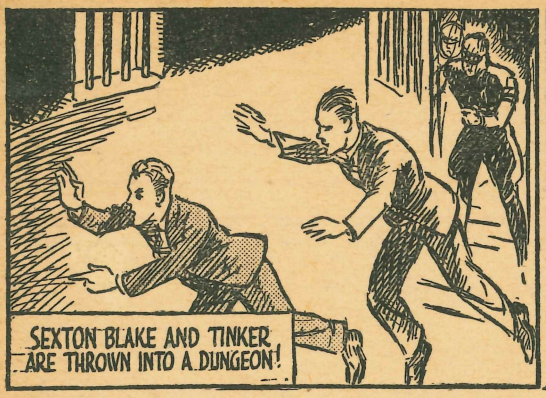


1. The Pirates' speed-boat drew rapidly alongside a huge rock just outside the entrance to the mysterious castle. With the creak of chains, a drawbridge was lowered across the swirling waters as the High-Speed Pirates, led by their leader, the Man in the Steel Mask, appeared on deck.

2. With armed Pirates on either side, Sexton Blake and Tinker were escorted across the drawbridge into the shadows of the castle. It looked as though Sexton Blake's plan for capturing the Pirates had failed after all.



3. The Pirates jerked their prisoners along a high gallery, and an amazing sight met Blake's eyes. Right in the middle of the wide expanse of stone-flagged floor below was a huge wireless station. The famous detective's mind raced. So that was it! The High-Speed Pirates had built a super wireless station in their secret hide-out and all radio signals that were sent out by unsuspecting liners and trading ships were received by the Pirates. Not only that, the Pirates could also tell the exact spot where any ship was at the time it sent out a message.



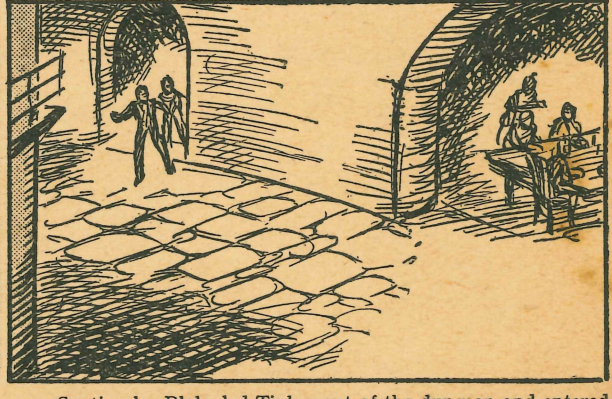
4. Sexton Blake understood everything now. As soon as a message was sent out by a ship, the Pirates' wireless operator would receive it, work out the ship's exact position, and the Man in the Steel Mask would then set out with his men in the speed-boat and raid the ship.

5. Blake and Tinker were flung into a dungeon by the masked Pirates and the door securely locked and bolted. But Sexton Blake was not giving in without a fight. Helping his plucky assistant to his feet, he quickly explained to Tinker his plan for escape.

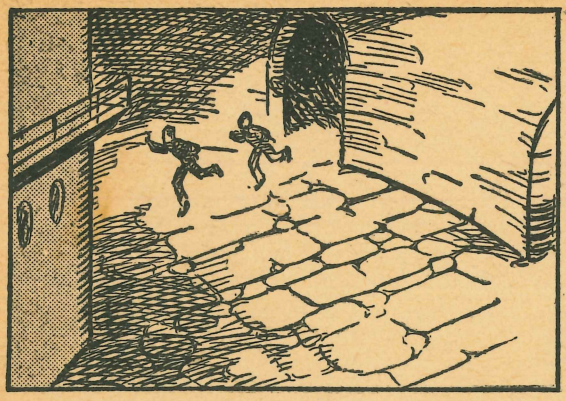
6. An hour later, Blake heard footsteps coming towards the dungeon. A man was coming to bring them food. Obeying his guv'nor's whispered instructions Tinker hastily untied his shoe laces and slipped off one of his shoes.

7. With his back against the wall, Tinker waited for the door to open. As it did so, Blake took a flying kick at the tray, sending the food into the man's face. Taken by surprise, he staggered back. Before he could recover, Tinker brought the heel of his shoe down on the man's head.

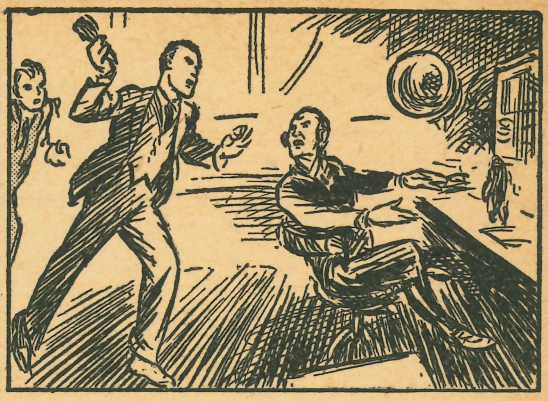
8. The Pirate slumped to the floor. Blake and Tinker bound and gagged him with the sheets from the small bed in the corner of the dungeon and rolled him under the bed. The door of the dungeon had, of course, been left open by the Pirate.



9. Cautiously, Blake led Tinker out of the dungeon and entered the great hall. The sound of laughter and voices came to their ears. The High-Speed Pirates were seated at a table, discussing further plans in a large room adjoining the hall. Blake motioned Tinker to be as quiet as possible.

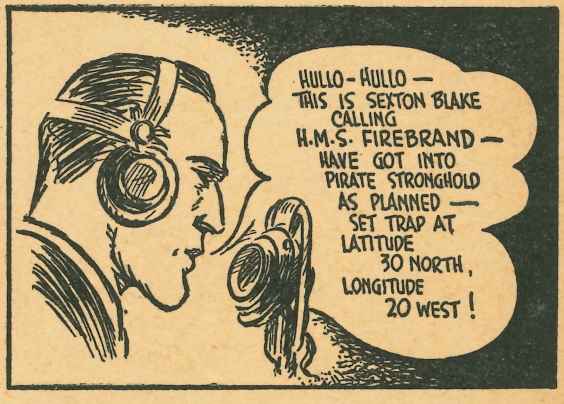


10. Hesitating for only a few moments, Sexton Blake decided to take a chance. Nodding silently in the direction of the wireless station, he sped rapidly across the stone-flagged floor, followed by Tinker. Luckily enough, none of the Pirates heard or spotted them.



11. Outside the wireless operator's room, Blake stooped and jerked off his shoe. The plan which had worked once could work again! He burst into the wireless operator's room and, before the operator could utter a cry, cracked him on the head with the shoe.

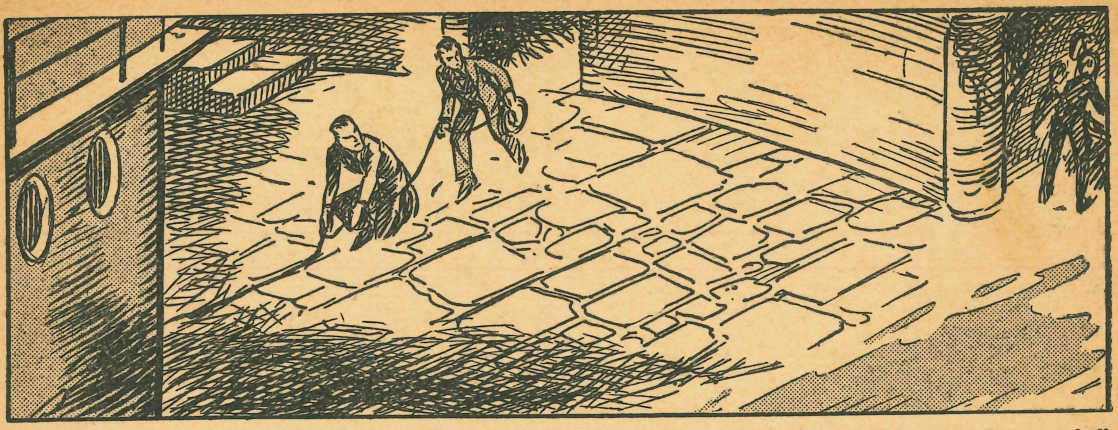
12. The operator tumbled out of his chair on to the floor. He had only been stunned, however, and might wake up at any moment. Telling Tinker to keep a watchful eye on the Pirate, Blake bent over the controls of the wireless station. The first part of his daring plan had succeeded.


HULLO - HULLO — THIS IS SEXTON BLAKE CALLING H.M.S. FIREBRAND — HAVE GOT INTO PIRATE STRONGHOLD AS PLANNED — SET TRAP AT LATITUDE 30 NORTH, LONGITUDE 20 WEST!

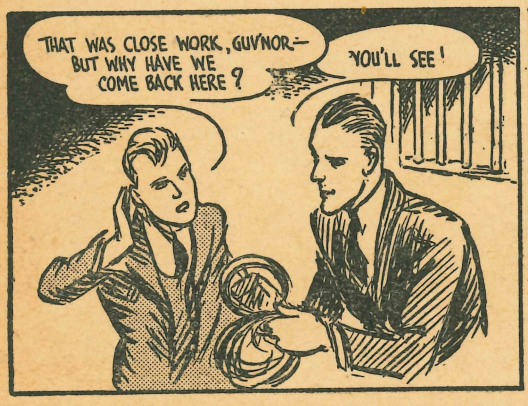
13. Sexton Blake knew that the British warship H.M.S. "Firebrand" was patrolling some miles away. He swiftly radioed a message to the warship explaining that he had found the Pirates' Stronghold and telling the captain to proceed at once to a given position.

14. Dropping his headphones, the detective then clambered behind the radio. Attaching a long length of wire to the wireless receiving set, Sexton Blake instructed Tinker to fix a microphone to the other end. Tinker was puzzled, but obeyed his chief without a word.

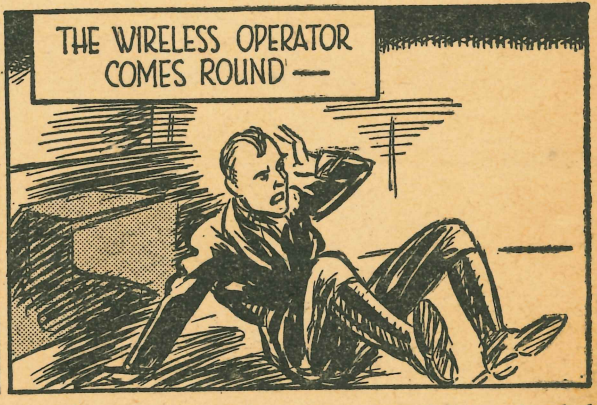
15. With the job completed, Blake told his plucky assistant what he had next in mind. They were to run the wire back to the dungeon they had only just left! Tinker knew that this was going to be the most dangerous part of their job.



16. His heart beating furiously, Tinker followed his chief down the steps from the wireless station into the great hall. Carefully, Sexton Blake inserted the microphone wire between cracks in the large stone floor. It was certain that for the time being, at least, none of the Pirates would notice that thin length of wire across the floor of the hall. Luckily enough, the Pirates were still busy with their plans and did not notice the detective and his assistant. Swiftly and silently Blake and Tinker edged their way back to their cell.



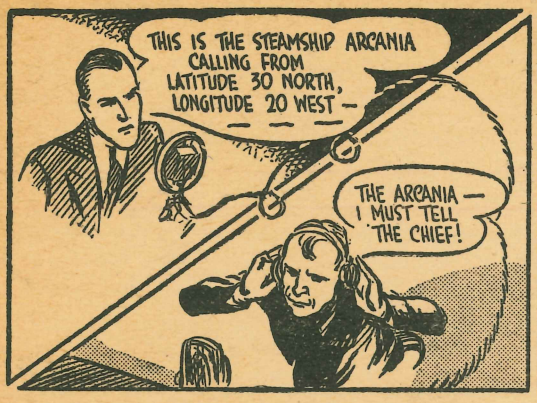
17. Within a few seconds, Blake and Tinker were back in the dungeon. Still mystified, Tinker asked his guv'nor why they had returned to the cell. Blake smiled grimly. He knew that all this must be very mysterious to his assistant, but Tinker would soon find out.



18. Meanwhile, the wireless operator who had been knocked out by Blake had come round. Shaking his head to clear it, he suddenly remembered what had happened. Staggering to his feet he set out to find his leader and report the escape of Sexton Blake and Tinker.

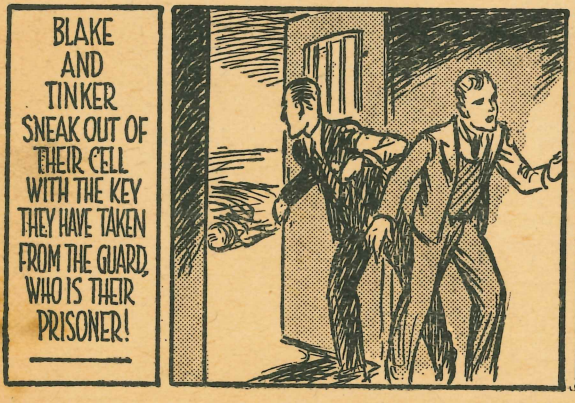
19. The Man in the Steel Mask was seated in his private study going over a few plans when the operator dashed into the room. In a few stumbling words, he told his leader that Blake and Tinker had managed to get away and had attacked him.

20. With a cry of rage, the Man in the Steel Mask, followed by the operator, raced towards the dungeon where Blake and Tinker were seated. His gaze fell on the downcast faces of the detective and his assistant. Turning he roared fiercely at the operator for making a mistake.

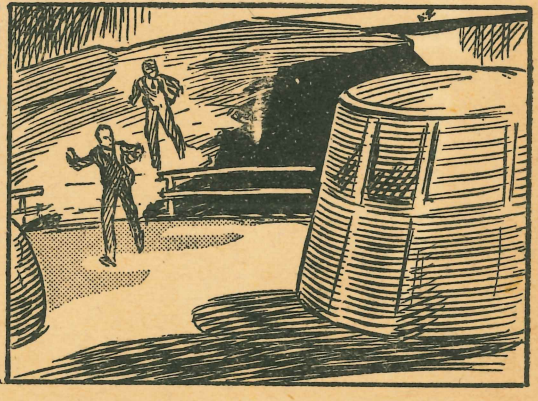


21. No sooner had the Man in the Steel Mask and the operator disappeared than Blake took up the microphone he had smuggled back to the dungeon. Tinker's eyes opened wide and then he grinned. At last, he began to understand Blake's clever plan.

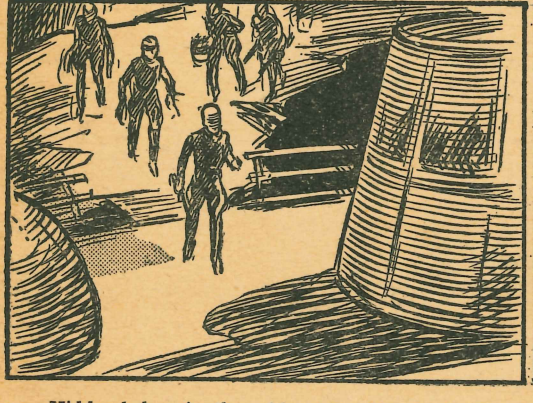
22. Waiting for a few moments until he knew the wireless operator would be back at the radio set, Blake spoke into the microphone. "This is the steamship 'Arcania,'" he began quietly. At the other end of the wire, the operator listened excitedly. Here was some good news for his leader.



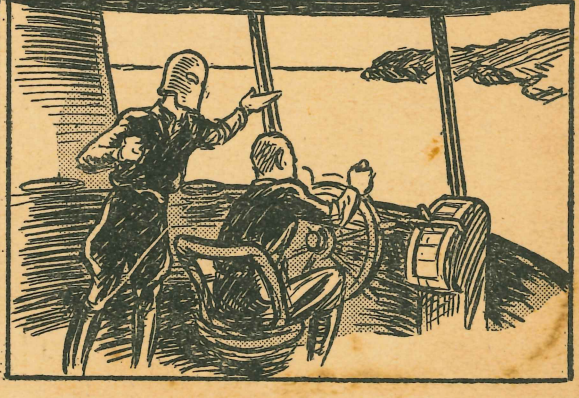
23. Scribbling furiously on a slip of paper, the operator took down the supposed position of the "Arcania" that Blake gave him. He didn't know it was the actual position to where Blake had told the British warship "Firebrand" to go. It was beginning to look as if Blake's plan would work.



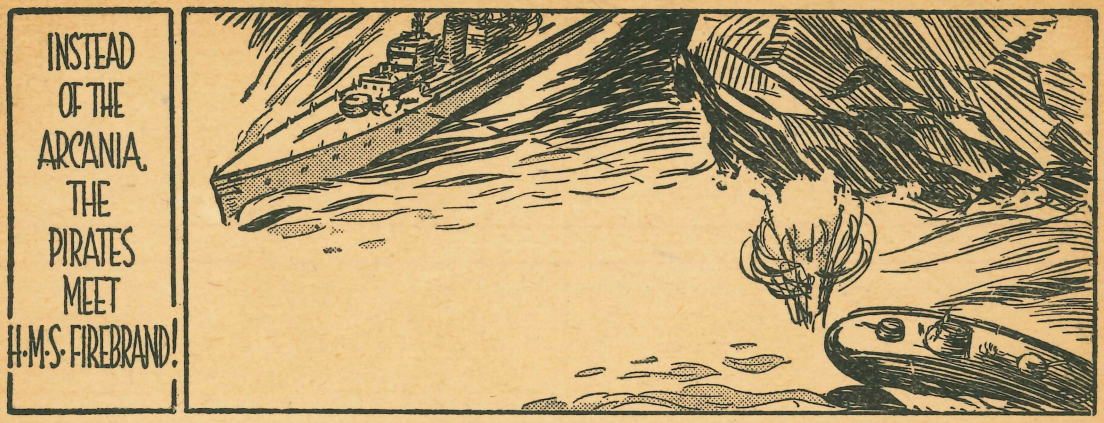
24. As soon as Blake was sure the operator had fallen for his trap, he and Tinker slipped quietly out of the dungeon and out of the castle, whilst the Man in the Steel Mask was still issuing orders to his Pirate crew. Rapidly, Blake made his way towards the Pirates' speed-boat.



25. Hidden below, in the cabin of the Man in the Steel Mask, Sexton Blake and Tinker heard the Pirates board their speed-boat. Blake chuckled grimly. If his plan worked, the high-speed Pirates were leaving for their last raid on unarmed shipping.

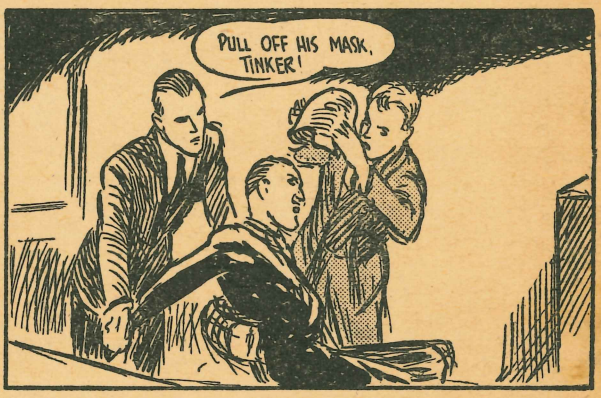


26. Making his way to the control cabin, the Man in the Steel Mask gave the pilot his instructions. He reckoned that the "Arcania" would just be rounding a headland of rock that could be seen a mile or so away. With a roar of powerful engines, the speed-boat set out.

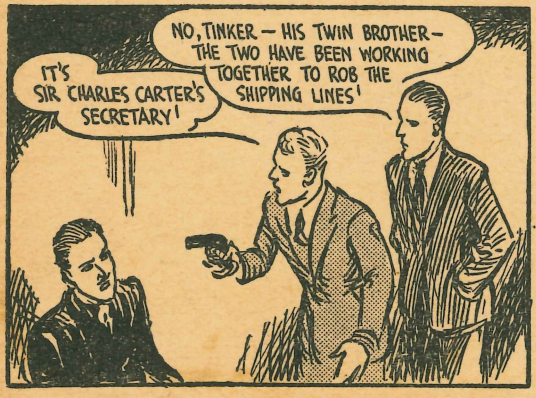


27. Going below to his cabin where Blake and Tinker were hidden, the Man in the Steel Mask awaited the signal that the "Arcania" had been sighted. But as the Pirates' speed-boat rounded the headland they came in sight of H.M. Warship, "Firebrand." Before the Pirates could turn their boat the warship's guns spat flame, and a column of water shot up into the air just in front of the speed-boat. It lurched crazily and the High-Speed Pirates knew that they were trapped. The pilot tried to head the speed-boat out to sea but it was too late.

28. In the cabin of the Man in the Steel Mask, Blake and Tinker left their hiding places and sprang forward as they heard the sound of the warship's guns. Taken by surprise, the leader of the Pirates was too astonished to defend himself.



29. Catching hold of the Pirate's wrists in powerful hands, Blake jerked his arms behind his back. Tinker tore a gun away from the Pirate's coat pocket and then lifted the Steel Mask from his face. Tinker gasped as he saw the face of the Man in the Steel Mask.


IT'S SIR CHARLES CARTER'S SECRETARY!
NO, TINKER — HIS TWIN BROTHER — THE TWO HAVE BEEN WORKING TOGETHER TO ROB THE SHIPPING LINES!

30. Tinker thought at first it was the secretary of Sir Charles Carter, chief of the Green Star Line. But Sexton Blake soon corrected him. It was the secretary's twin brother. They had been working together to raid the Green Star liners.

31. Faced with real danger, the High-Speed Pirates soon surrendered to the "Firebrand." The captain of the warship took Blake and Tinker on board and then—full speed for England where they received the grateful thanks of Sir Charles Carter himself. A job well done!

TOUGH TOD AND HAPPY ANNIE

A JOLLY STORY OF TWO RUN-AWAY ORPHANS AND THEIR EXCITING ADVENTURE IN A STORM AT SEA—ABOARD A PIANO!

Tod and Annie Get a Ducking!

"Coo! Look!" cried Annie, kneeling down on the edge of the quay. "Jelly-fishes!"

"Come away!" shouted Tod, anxiously. "You'll fall in the water if you're not careful."

"No, I shan't!" declared Annie. "Come and see the jelly-fishes."

Tod didn't answer. He sat down on a pile of old ropes and, taking his money from his pocket, began counting it carefully.

He was worried. They had very little money and something would have to be done about it very soon.

Tod and Annie weren't very old, but they were living on their own. In fact, they were running away from the orphanage kept by Mr. Stiggins, who had treated them so cruelly.

Mr. Stiggins was always trying to find them. But so far Tod and Annie had been much too clever for Mr. Stiggins, and had been roaming around the countryside, doing good turns to people who needed help, and earning their living as they went, by doing odd jobs.

They wanted to go on being free, but Tod knew that if they didn't soon find some means of earning a little money they would find things very difficult.

Yet all Annie could worry about was jelly-fish!

"You'll fall in!" Tod shouted. "Come away from the edge."

It was a pretty little harbour at Mudhaven, but apparently business wasn't too good, and there was hardly a soul about.

A little ship lay moored to the quay a little way along. On the quay itself was a wooden house, very neat and trim, with clean curtains at the windows and flowers in big pots standing by the door.

Tod was counting his money all over again as if hoping he would make it more this time.

Annie called to him again.

"Tod! There's a lot of other fishes now—little ones—like sprats! Look!"

"You'll fall in!" he warned her. "Come back—*Annie*!" He almost screamed her name. He had glanced up just in time to see his sister lose her balance.

For a moment she was tottering on the edge of the quay, wildly waving her arms. Then, with a cry for help, over she went, and there was a terrific splash as she hit the water.

Tod whipped off his jacket. Where his money went he did not know and did not care. He ran across the quay and dived into the water.

He knew that Annie could swim, but she might have been hurt in her fall. In he went, as clean as a whistle.

When he came up again and started swimming he saw Annie. She was floating but was under the piles—the wooden beams that supported the quay.

"Hold on!" he called. "I'm coming!"

"I can't get out," she spluttered.

"You'll have to clamber over the piles," he said. "I'll help you."

With Tod's help Annie managed to get clear of the piles, and then they both swam to the slippery steps, green with seaweed, that led up to the quay.

Dripping water at every step, they reached the top.

" We'd better go to that wooden house," said Tod, " and get our clothes dried. Run for it, Annie."

There was no one else about so they had to help themselves. They ran to the little house from which came the strains of piano-playing and hammered on the door.

There was no answer. Still the playing went on.

Tod thudded on the door again, louder than ever. No one came, but the piano-playing ended with a terrific bang. Silence fell on the wooden house, so Tod thumped the door with his fist.

He heard the sounds of heavy footsteps. Then the door opened. They stared up at a red-faced man dressed in a blue serge reefer jacket and blue serge trousers—a seaman of some sort.

" Tar me ! " he exclaimed. " What's all this ? "

" Annie fell in the river, sir," explained Tod. " Can we please come in and dry our clothes ? "

" Annie fell in, did she ? " echoed the seaman. " Then how did you get your clothes wet, too ? Did you go in after her ? "

" Yes, he did," said Annie. " I can swim, but I got under the piles and Tod helped me out. And we're wet and cold——"

" To be sure," said the old man. " Come on in. I've got a fire in the kitchen."

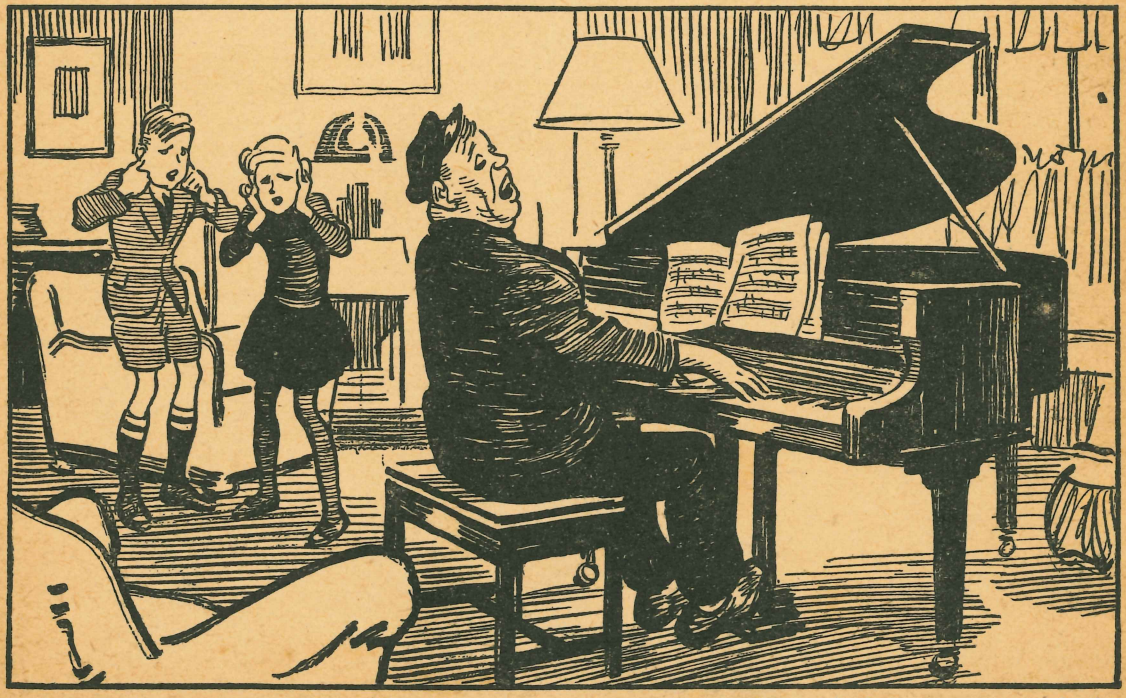
So in they went. The old man got blankets in which they wrapped themselves, while their wet clothes steamed in front of the kitchen fire.

" There ! " said the old man. " They'll soon be dry. But hadn't I better run along and tell your mother where you are ? "

Annie looked very wistful.

" We've got no mother or father now," she said, and told the old man how they had run away from Mr. Stiggins' orphanage.

He looked rather sorry for the runaway orphans.



The skipper started playing " A Home on the Rolling Deep ! " but as most of the notes were wrong it didn't sound so good.

" You'd better stay here, then," he said. " I've got no servant. You can clean up the house for me and cook my food. Young Tod there can clean my boots and chop the wood and fetch the coal. And you can look after the house when I'm at sea."

" Are you a fisherman ? " asked Tod.

" No, son. I'm Skipper Symes of the good ship Seamew, that lies at the quay yonder. We load up with clay from the quarries and take it across to France, and we bring back onions and potatoes and stuff like that. I'll be sailing at the end of the week. But what do you say ? Will you stay here with me for a spell ? "

" Of course," said Annie, eagerly. And that settled it.

The Flood.

But Tod and Annie didn't enjoy all their stay in Skipper Symes' wooden house on the quay, because he would keep on playing the piano and hitting the wrong notes.

Annie told him about it, too.

" You were wrong, there," she said, when he made a very bad mistake.

He went as red as a beetroot and his bushy eyebrows bristled.

He started playing " A Home on the Rolling Deep ! " but as most of the notes were wrong it didn't sound quite so good as he imagined.

Annie stuffed her fingers in her ears and went away to the kitchen to help Tod. And there on the step was a tiny kitten.

" Miaow, miaow ! " it wailed appealingly.

" Oh, the poor thing ! " exclaimed Annie. " It's starving hungry."

She got it some milk, and the kitten, purring loudly, made short work of it. After that it washed itself carefully.

Annie was so interested in the kitten that she failed to notice the end of the piano playing. Then Skipper Symes came into the kitchen, and there was horror on his face.

" A cat ! " he gasped. " Drive it out of here ! "

" Drive it out ! " echoed Annie. " Whoever heard of such a thing ! "

" Drive it out, I say ! " bellowed the skipper. " I can't stand cats ! They give me the creeps ! And that kitten doesn't belong to anybody. It's been wandering around the quay for days ! "

He jumped at the kitten and it fled for its life out of the door to the tiny garden at the back, where it stood miaowing pitifully.

The skipper slammed the door shut.

" Understand," he said sternly. " I won't allow cats in my house. I hate them ! "

And with that he snorted angrily and went out to see to the loading of his ship.

" Ooh, dear ! " said Annie. " We want to stay here and we want to look after that poor kitten. We can't do both."

" Yes, we can," declared Tod. " The kitten can live in the shed. The skipper hardly ever goes there now we do all his housework for him."

" That's a grand idea," said Annie.

So the kitten was made comfortable under the mangle in the shed, but there was always the possibility that the skipper would find out what was going on, and then there would be trouble.

But the time came when the skipper had to go to sea.

" Now," he said. " You two stay here and look after my house. Keep my piano well dusted, and—mind !—no cats in the house."

" We shan't forget," said Tod.

They stood on the quay and waved as the Seamew sailed out of the river. They watched it get smaller and smaller until it vanished over the sky-line.

Tod and Annie went back into the wooden house on the quay.

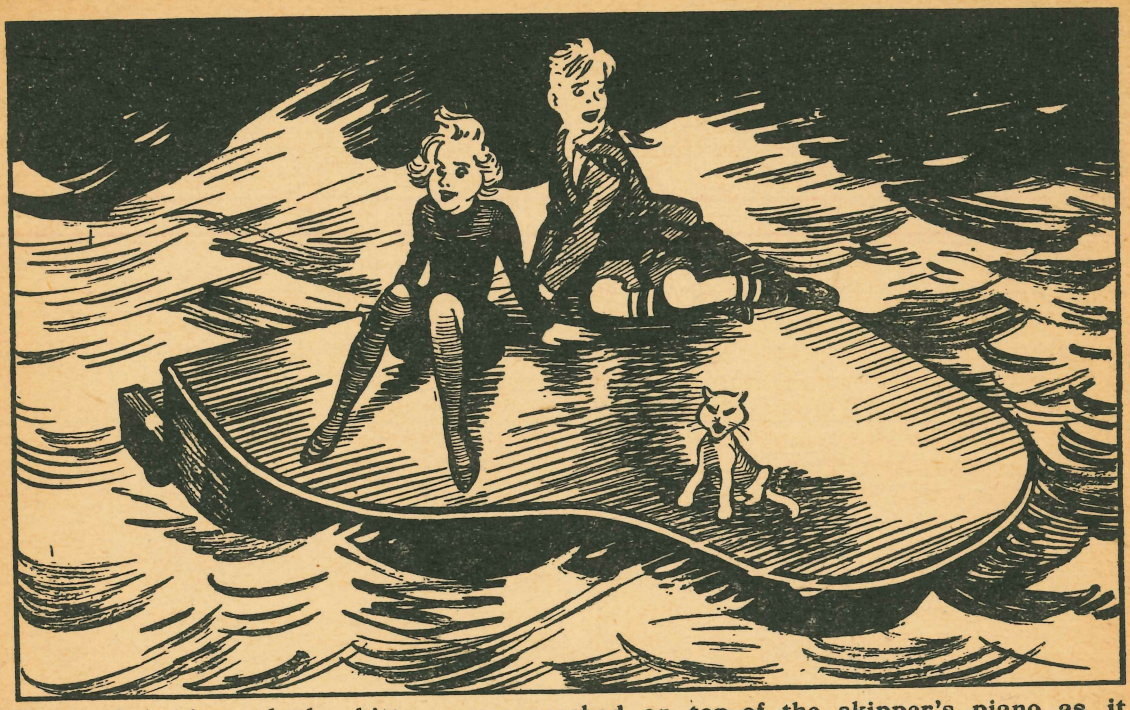
" It's jolly comfortable in here," said Tod.

" Lovely," agreed Annie. " And to think that that poor kitten only has the shed to live in. It isn't right, Tod."

" No, it isn't," replied Tod. " But it wouldn't be right to bring it in here since we know that the skipper wouldn't like it. After all, it's his house, not ours."

" I know that," said Annie. " But it's silly for a grown man to be afraid of cats."

" There are plenty of people," said Tod,



Tod and Annie and the kitten were perched on top of the skipper's piano as it was swept along by the rushing waters.

" who don't like cats. I don't know why it is so. We can't do anything about it."

So they got on with their work and the day wore on to evening. Another day dawned, and it was not a nice day. The wind blew hard and then it rained—such rain as Tod and Annie had never seen before.

The river rose higher and higher until the water was on a level with the top of the quay.

Annie put the kettle on for a cup of tea. She could not see much danger except for the skipper away on the stormy sea.

" I hope the Seamew won't get wrecked, that's all," she said.

" The wind's dying down, now," said Tod. " It's the rain I don't like. I've never seen so much rain at one time, and the river is getting higher. Look, Annie ! The water is coming over the quay ! "

He didn't know that a lock gate higher up the river had broken, but it was so, and there was a solid wall of water sweeping down towards the sea.

It came roaring through the town and over the jetties. It came hissing over the quays and beyond until all land was hidden from view.

It was one great wave, sweeping all before it. The seething mass was almost up to the wooden house on the quay when Annie remembered the kitten in the shed.

" Pussy ! " she gasped, and raced out into the garden. She was up to her ankles in water as she reached the shed and forced the door open. The kitten was on top of the mangle. She snatched it up in her arms and fought her way with it back to the house.

" I don't care what the skipper thinks," she said boldly. " We can't let the poor thing stay out there."

Tod wasn't saying anything. He had made sure all doors and windows were shut, and he was watching that wall of water coming nearer and nearer.

And then with a crash it hit the wooden house and lifted it up bodily. The house floated off the quay into the river. It began to come to bits. One wall broke away and the roof slipped off.

Everything was in terrible confusion. Tod found himself swimming for his life. He caught a glimpse of Annie and grabbed her by the shoulder. The furniture was floating away from the house.

Something big went sailing by into the gloom of evening. Tod got a grip on it and hauled himself to the top, dragging Annie up beside him. She was still clutching the bedraggled kitten in her arms.

"Ooh, dear!" she spluttered. "What's happened?"

"The house has been washed away," said Tod, "and we're sailing out to sea on something."

Annie studied their strange craft, and laughed a little.

"That's funny," she said. "Or it would be funny if we weren't in danger. We're sailing out to sea on the skipper's piano!"

And so they were—perched on the top of it with the cat he hated—sailing away on the piano he loved!

"Goodness, what's going to happen to us," said Tod. "It's getting dark. No one will see us. And I wonder how long this piano will float?"

"I never knew before that pianos would float," said Annie.

"Neither did I," replied Tod. "And perhaps this one won't float for long. We've got to be rescued, Annie. Shout!"

So they shouted as loudly as ever they could.

"Help! Help! Help!"

But it didn't seem much use. They obtained no answer and night came down over the heaving waters.

They huddled together as best they could on the top of the piano. Tod was afraid it would sink, but somehow it didn't. The kitten kept miaowing pitifully all the time.

Now and again Tod shouted at the top of his voice—"Help!" Yet nothing happened. And the night was so dark that they could scarcely see their hands before their faces.

Annie did her best to help him, but she was cold and weak now, and her

Skipper Symes

cries could not be heard far. Tod was hoarse with shouting. They could see nothing but blackness all around them.

And then the kitten wriggled out of Annie's arms. She tried to stop it but failed.

"I've lost the kitten!" she wailed. "And——"

She stopped talking, for just below their dangling feet came the strangest noise that ever was heard at sea—the jangling notes of music.

And it didn't stop there. The music went on, running right up the scale to the high treble notes and down again to the deep booming notes of the bass.

Up and down—up and down. It was the kitten on the keyboard, pattering up and down the keys trying to find some way off the piano and meeting only with water.

"Miaow, miaow!" it wailed, and scampered up the keyboard and down again.

Jangle, jangle went the weird music, ringing over the watery waste.

And all of a sudden a light showed quite close to them and a ship came out of the darkness.

"Tar me!" exclaimed a hoarse voice. "That sounds like my piano!"

"The skipper!" cried Annie. "We're saved!"

And she was right. The Seamew came alongside and they climbed aboard her.

" Whatever has happened ? " snapped the skipper. " How dare you sail out to sea on my piano with that cat ! "

" It wasn't our fault," said Tod, and told him what had occurred.

" In any case," said Annie, " if it wasn't for pussy playing the piano, you'd never have found us, and then you'd have lost your piano altogether."

The skipper frowned darkly.

" Maybe I have lost it," he said, " but we'll see."

He got his men to put ropes round the piano, and after a struggle they managed to haul it on deck, quite undamaged.

The skipper was awfully pleased about that.

" You're right," he said, stooping to stroke the kitten. " I might have lost my piano, and even if I bought a new one it could never be the same to me. As for my house, I can get another. The insurance company will pay for the furniture, so I'll soon have money to buy more."

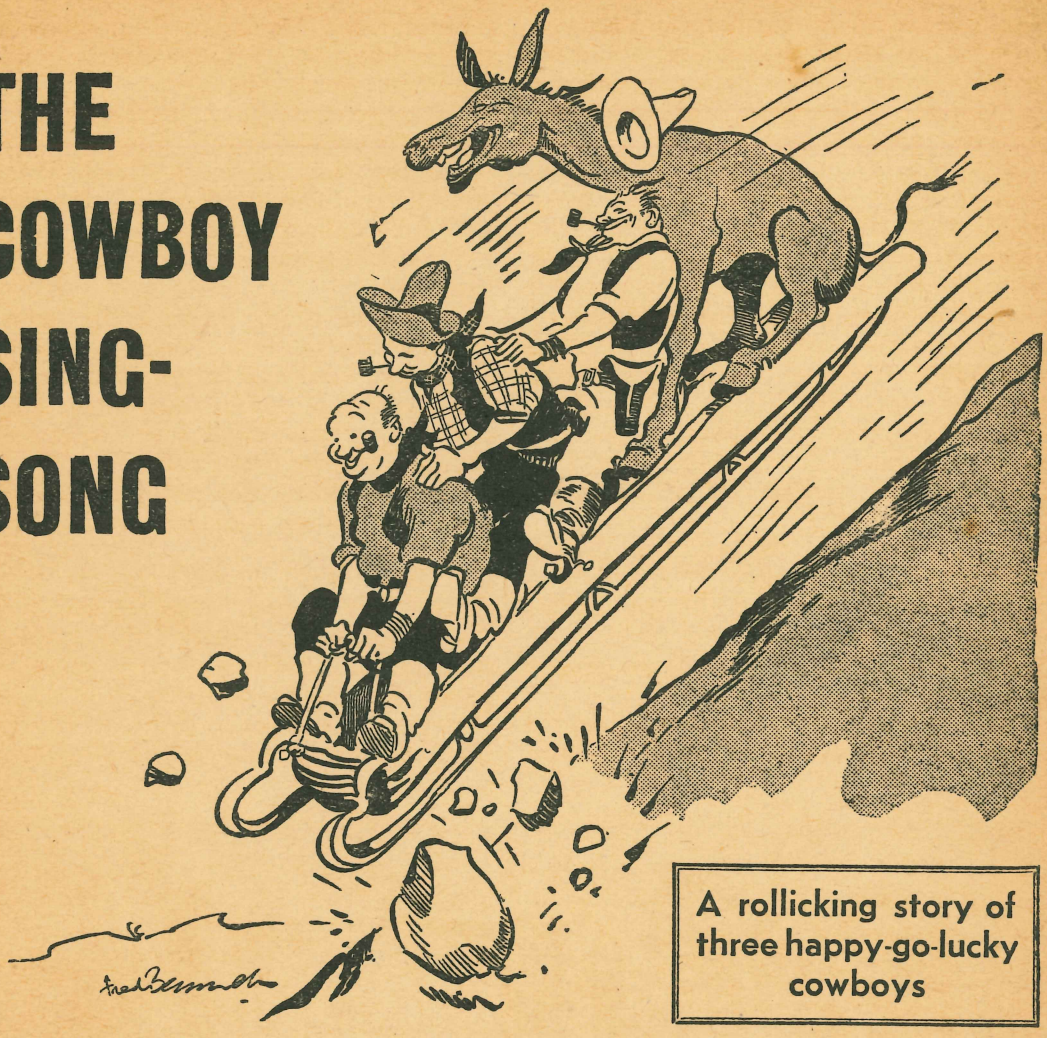
And when he came to harbour again the floods had gone down. He did get another house, and he did buy more furniture. And Tod and Annie stayed with him for a long time and were very happy, while the kitten purred away on the mat before the fire and didn't seem to mind the skipper's piano-playing at all.

THE END

SANDY AND MUDDY . . THE TWO TERRORS OF THE TERRIERS

STOP PUTTING POSTERS UP THERE! GO AND POST A SENTRY FOR ME!
WE'VE GOT ORDERS TO POST YOU CHUM. SO COME QUIETLY!
IT'S NO USE, IT WON'T OPEN ANY WIDER. WE'LL HAVE TO SEND HIM PARCEL POST!
TO SERGY
I HOPE A 1½P STAMP IS ENOUGH FOR A SENTRY!
SERGY CAN PAY THE EXTRA!
POST OFFICE
PARCELS
LETTERS
THIS SIDE UP
WITH CARE
URGENT
COO! LOOK, IT'S ARRIVED BY THE NOON MAIL. SERGY'LL BE PLEASED TO HAVE A SENTRY DELIVERED SO QUICKLY!
HERE'S A PARCEL FOR YOU 2/- TO PAY.
CAN IT WAIT? I'M JUST OFF TO THE PICTURES!
G P O
I.O.U.
IT'S LIVE STOCK AND MUST BE FED - SO PAY UP!
THERE YOU ARE HE'S JUMPING WITH DELIGHT!
THIS SIDE UP
LIVE STOCK
TO BE FED
SERGY

THE COWBOY SING-SONG



A rollicking story of three happy-go-lucky cowboys

Three Cowboy Chums!

THERE was a lot of excitement going on at the Double Bar Ranch. Weird, mournful moans could be heard floating through the open window of the big shack where the Double Bar cowboys had their meals every day.

Terrible sounds they were, but nobody was getting hurt.

It was only those three cowboy chums, Snorty Summers, Tubby Wilson and Lofty Lewis preparing for Lonesome Valley's annual sing-song. Folks came from miles around—not only to take part in it, but to listen to the cowboy competitors.

Snorty, Tubby and Lofty had been practising their special song, " Down on My Prairie Home ! " for months. It seemed to have been quite a nice piece of music when the chums had first started to learn it ; but after about three months, when they'd sung it for something like five hundred times, it somehow didn't sound so good.

Snorty accused Tubby of being more often out of tune than in it, and that Lofty on the old piano was always playing a page of music ahead of the two singers. Actually Tubby was as much to blame for the awful noise as his two chums. He had a voice that sounded something like bath-water swishing down a plug-hole, and when he tried for the

high notes you might easily have mistaken the noise for a railway engine about to give its warning shriek before entering a long tunnel. Otherwise, Tubby's voice was quite good!

"Pity you don't get that old pianner tuned, Lofty," grumbled Snorty, after they'd tried their famous tune for the twentieth time that morning. "We'll never stand a chance at the contest if Sheriff Saunders hears that gosh-dinged noise. It's sure awful!"

"There's nothing wrong with this pianner," snorted Lofty indignantly. "An' don't say nothin' about my playin', either. Let me tell you boys thet I've won cups and medals for my pianny-playin', I have!"

"You must ha' bribed the judge, then," said Tubby nastily. "'Cos *he* was the one who oughter 'ave had the medals —for listenin' to you!"

The singing practice came to an abrupt finish after that.

"Mebbe we'd better save our voices till to-morrow afternoon," Tubby Wilson reminded his chums. "We don't want to miss winnin' thet fifty dollars after all the practisin' we've put in."

"You're sure right," said Snorty. "But we gotta watch out. Sheriff told me yesterday thet there's a bunch o' fellers comin' from Mexico Springs who reckon thet fifty dollars prize is theirs!"

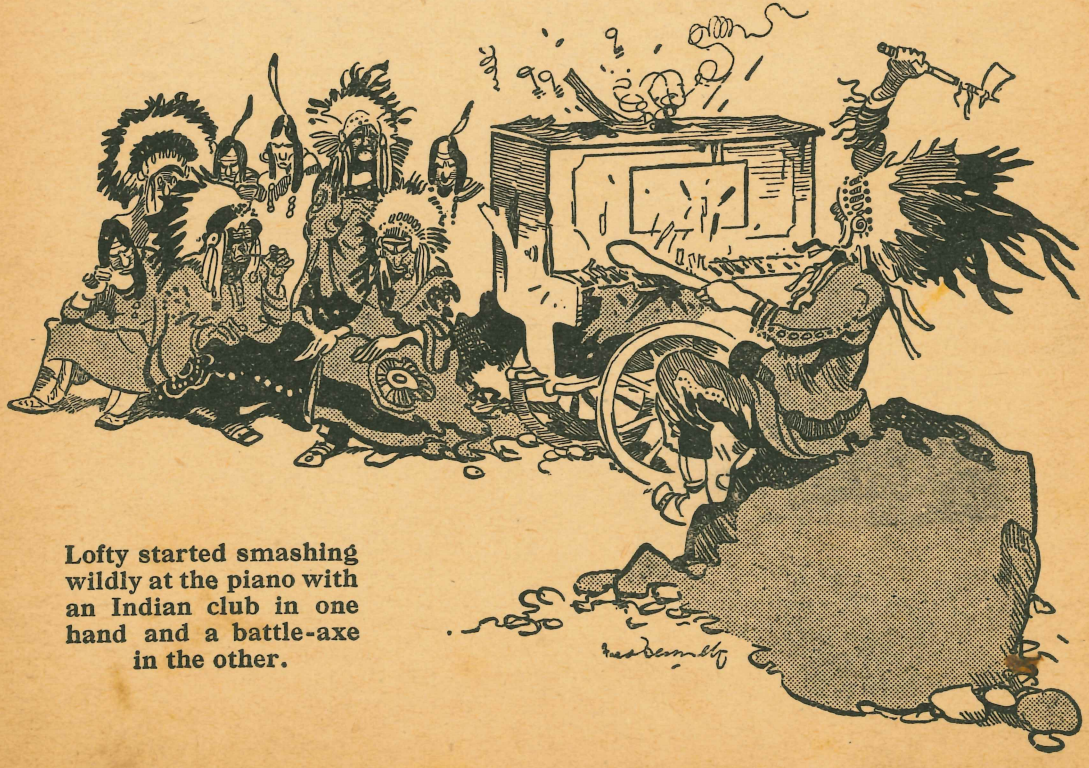
"I heerd somethin' about 'em myself," said Lofty.

"They're goin' to turn up in a lot of high-falutin' fancy dress costooms of some sort, and call themselves the Mexican Melody Makers. Anyways, I figger my pianny playing'll just about get us through for the first prize!"

He rose from the old piano, kicking away the empty barrel on which he had been sitting.

"Guess we'll have a bit o' trouble gettin' this pianner down to the Mission Hall," he said. "An' I don't want to damage it. It was a good pianner once, excep' for the black notes!"

Certainly the piano did look the worse for wear. Mounted on a pair of big wheels,



Lofty started smashing wildly at the piano with an Indian club in one hand and a battle-axe in the other.

its frame had been knocked badly out of shape, and several of the strings had found their way through the top of the instrument. Quite a lot of the keys played when you struck them, although they didn't play strictly in tune. But a little thing like that didn't worry the three chums.

The next morning, after breakfast, Shorty, Tubby and Lofty hurried along to the dining-hall and set to work getting the old piano out of the shack.

They managed it at last, and pulled it round to the rear of the ranch buildings. An old-fashioned stage-coach stood under the cover of a wooden out-house. The coach was used only when any of the Double Bar boys made special journeys into Lonesome, some five miles away, to bring back visitors to the ranch.

Sitting on a nest of straw inside the coach, an old hen began clucking with sudden alarm at sight of the three pardners; while hitched by a length of rope to the coach was Mabel, the ranch's pet mule, chewing quietly in front of a boxful of hay.

"C'mon, old gel," said Snorty briskly, untying the mule with a quick flick of his hand. "We got somethin' big on to-day, and it's extra oats fer you ef it comes off!"

It took nearly half an hour to persuade Mabel the mule to get between the shafts of the old stage-coach. The obstinate animal didn't like the idea of being parted from her breakfast, and it wasn't until she'd kicked a couple of holes through the front of the coach that the chums succeeded in hitching her between the shafts. Mules are like that!

The rickety old piano was hastily hitched to the back of the coach by a long length of rope. Then, as the three musical cowboys moved off, a crowd of cowboys stormed out of the dining-hut to give them a cheer.

"Good luck, pals!" cried old Hippy Horton. "Don't get skeered o' them Mexican galoots. It's you fer the fust prize, boys!"

"An' the boys'll be there to help you win it," added Boss Lannigan, foreman of the ranch.

The Hold-Up!

EVERY seat in the mission hall was filled with a cheery, happy bunch of men, women and children.

A long programme of songs, music, conjuring, and other entertainment had been arranged, and the audience enjoyed every minute of it. Then on to the platform stumped Sheriff Saunders, who was to act as judge.

"Waal, you folks," he announced importantly, "the citizens o' this 'ere township have put up a prize of fifty dollars for the best bit o' singin' on this here platform this afternoon. P'raps it's as well there's only two entries, though. Fust of all we have four boys from Mexico Springs to entertain us. An' if they can beat our local boys—I mean the three singing pardners o' Double Bar ranch—then they deserve the prize. Pussonally, I don't think they stands a chance, although I ain't supposed to offer an opinion, 'cos I'm judgin' the contest. Anyways, allow me to present the Mexican Melody Makers, in moosic, song and dance. Give 'em a hand, folks!"

The four cowboys from Mexico Springs put up a good show. Dressed in their fancy costumes of Mexican bandits they went at it hammer and tongs. Although their singing wasn't very tuneful, they made up for it by a lot of noise. To bring in a few extra effects by way of entertainment they put in a little gun-play, firing into the roof of the hall to mark the end of every chorus.

Then came Snorty Summers, and Tubby Wilson. Bringing up the rear, and looking very ferocious in a fancy costume of an Indian chief, was Lofty Lewis. He sat down at the old piano, struck the two best notes on it, and away they went at the tops of their voices.

The three pardners were the winners from the start. They had the audience joining in by the time they'd reached the second chorus, and as the fourth and final chorus finished, old Sheriff Saunders stepped up and handed over the fifty dollars.

"Take it, boys!" he shouted, trying to make himself heard above the cheers of the audience. "You sure deserve it!"

Four dangerous-looking bandits came into view. "Hands up, you song-birds!" shouted one.

The defeated Mexican Melody Makers slunk out of the hall muttering wild and angry threats. Somehow they thought they'd been handed a raw deal!

With the end of the afternoon's entertainment, Snorty and Tubby hurried round to the back of the hall, whilst Lofty went on ahead, wheeling his piano. They found Mabel the mule quietly finishing up a meal of oats, still tied to the wheel of the stage-coach.

"Guess we'll make straight back fer the ranch," said Snorty. "We got fifty dollars in hard cash here, and we don't wanta meet trouble on the way!"

"You've said it, Snorty," wheezed Tubby. "I got a kinda feelin' that them Melody Maker fellers ain't none too pleased about somethin'!"

Twenty minutes later they got the shock of their lives, half a mile out of Lonesome. On the side of the road they came alongside a group of Indians.

In front of them, squatted on a chunk of rock, they saw Lofty still in his Indian get-up. He was strumming away for dear life at the old piano, singing at the top of his voice and giving his listeners a special performance on his own.

Lofty seemed determined to get the last ounce out of that piano. He started smashing wildly at the keys with an Indian club in one hand and a vicious-looking war-axe in the other. The din was terrific. Piano keys, strings, and chunks of wood went flying in a shower round the piano, and the louder Lofty played, the more impressed the Indians became.

" Guess we'll leave Lofty to it ! " growled Tubby, as, giving Mabel a friendly prod with his boot, they continued their journey. " He's sure gone crackers with that ol' box o' dominoes ! "

The sun was sinking behind the distant Purple Mountains as the two cowpunchers reached the road that led to the Double Bar ranch 'way down in the valley.

Suddenly there came a terrific crash as the hub of the front wheel caught the edge of a big rock jutting into the road.

" Gosh, she's over ! " shouted Snorty, as Mabel started kicking frantically at the coach behind her. Then with a snort of anger the mule gave one huge lunge.

Crash !

Snorty and Tubby were flung high into the air as Mabel the mule, with the front wheels dragging behind her, dashed off in the direction of the ranch. The two partners climbed on to the back of the old coach to think things over.

Then came a sudden interruption. From behind the big rocks lining the dusty road four dangerous looking bandits came into view, guns flashing.

" Hands up, you song birds ! " shouted one. " And hand over them fifty bucks, pronto ! "

" Corks ! " gasped Snorty. " It's them Mexico Spring boys ! "

There was nothing else to do but hand over the precious fifty dollars to their singing rivals, still dressed in their fearsome Mexican outfits.

But even as Snorty stooped to pass the money to the leader there came a fierce war-whoop. Turning in surprise, the four bandits saw a crowd of madly yelling, ferocious-looking Indians coming straight at them, with Lofty Lewis at their head.

The surprised Melody Makers didn't stop to argue. With one accord they dived behind the rocks and made for the safety of the thick sage-bush.

" Hi, stop them doggone thieves ! " roared Snorty. " They've got our fifty bucks ! "

The Indians, who had become firm friends with Lofty—the big white chief music-man—dashed off in pursuit of the bandits, uttering fierce, blood-curdling war-cries.

Five minutes later they returned, with four dusty and sorry-looking bandits.

" C'mon, cough up them fifty bucks ! " said Snorty severely. " Guess you guys didn't like losing thet contest, eh ? "

The four bandits broke into half-hearted grins.

" Sorry, gents," the leader said sheepishly as he handed back the prize money. " Guess it was jest a little joke ! "

"Well, we ain't exactly seen the joke yet," retorted Tubby. " You guys'd better beat it pronto, else——"

Two minutes later the four melody making cowboys of Mexico Springs were lost to sight in a cloud of dust.

" Waal, we've lost Mabel, but we got our money back," grinned Snorty.

But as he spoke a loud neighing announced the stubborn old mule's return. She came trotting up to the crumpled stage-coach.

" Tain't no use her tryin' to pull that coach no more," said Tubby to his chums. " Guess we'll jest have to walk ! "

But the Indian chief interrupted things at that moment.

" Big white men no walk home," he said, with a grin. " Me send back to Injun camp for white man's slippery ice-cart ! "

The three cowboys looked at each other in surprise. Their surprise turned to amazement as, five minutes later, they caught sight of a couple of the Indians pulling a big toboggan.

" You gettum on and sittum tight," said the old Indian chief. A minute later Snorty, Tubby and Lofty, with Mabel the mule perched at the back, were astride the toboggan, Tubby acting as driver, a broad grin on his face.

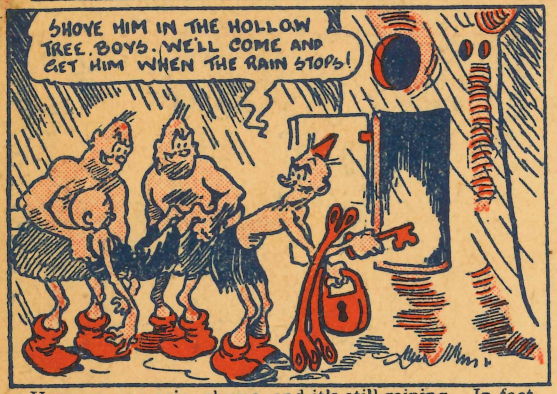
Then, with a tremendous push-off from a couple of big Indians, the three cowboys and Mabel went careering at express speed down the rough and rocky hillside, bumping, bashing, straight for the Double Bar ranch.

" Yippeeee ! " yelled the chums in chorus, the only time they'd ever been in tune !

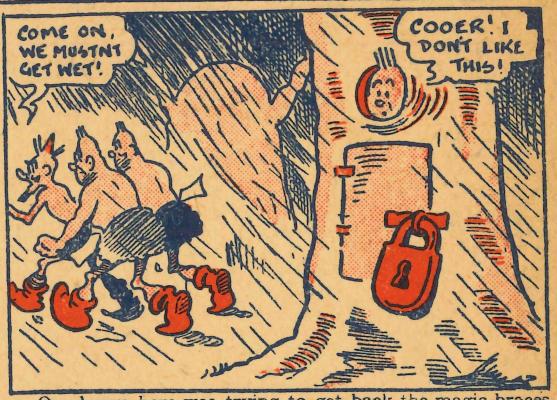
THE END

SIMON THE SIMPLE SLEUTH
HEY TEC! WILL YOU LOOK AFTER THIS BAG WHILE I CALL AT THE BANK?
BANK
O.K.
COO! THE SILLY MAN'S GONE AND FORGOTTEN HIS BAG!
BANK
HELP
DON'T STAND THERE DOING NOTHING YOU NITWIT! GO FOR A COPPER -THE BANK'S BEEN ROBBED! HURRY! RUN! DASH! QUICK!
O.K! I'LL GET ONE!
BANK
COO! I'M A DETECTIVE! PRAPS I'LL DO!
SKID
NEVER MIND MISTER, THE BURGLAR LEFT THIS BAG BEHIND! LET'S SEE WHAT'S IN IT, EH?
O.K! OPEN IT UP! THERE MIGHT BE SOME DIAMOND CONKERS OR SOME GOLD MARBLES IN IT!
WOW!
WILL SOMEBODY GET ME OUT OF THIS COAL HOLE!

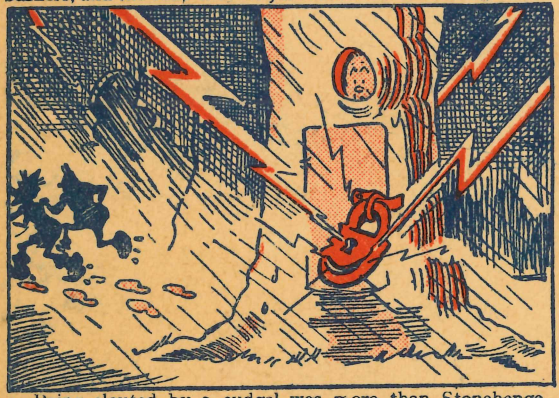
STONEHENGE KIT — THE ANCIENT BRIT.



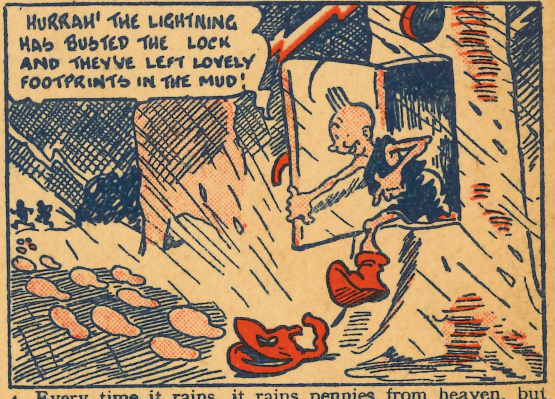
1. Here we are again, chums, and it's still raining. In fact, it's a proper storm. That wet-blanket with the whiskers is Whizzy, the wicked wizard. The beefy blokes are his Brit-bashers, and the chap they've just collared is Stonehenge Kit.



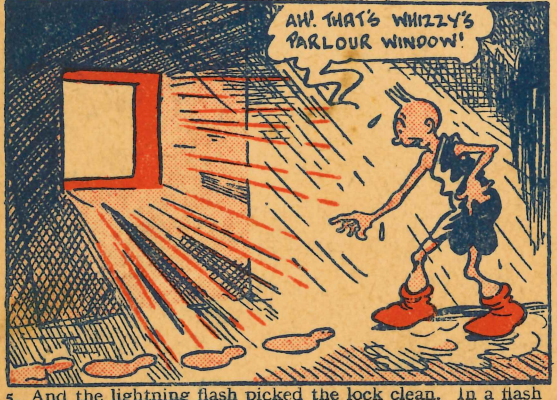
2. Our brave hero was trying to get back the magic braces that Whizzy pinched from King Kongo, when he took shelter beside a huge oak tree. But Whizzy & Co. were having a trunk-call inside the hollow trunk, and coshed poor old Kit.



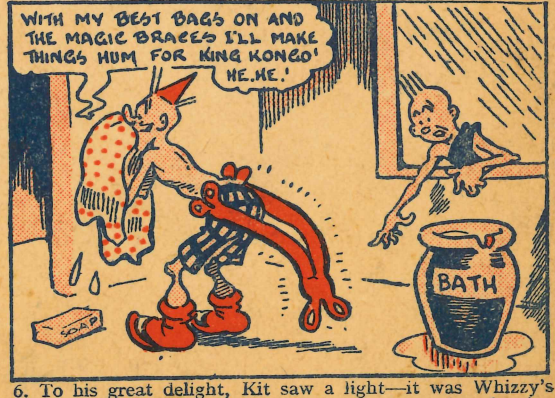
3. Being clouted by a cudgel was more than Stonehenge Kit could stand. He fell to the ground right out, and the Brit-bashers bunged him into the tree and left him. The storm was getting worser, so the three villuns vamoosed.



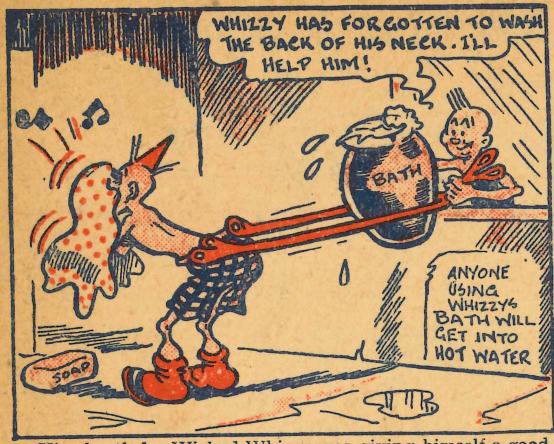
4. Every time it rains, it rains pennies from heaven, but the wet-stuff was now coming down in half-crowns and two-bob lots. The lightning flashed and the thunder rolled, so the lightning had another go and picked on the padlock.



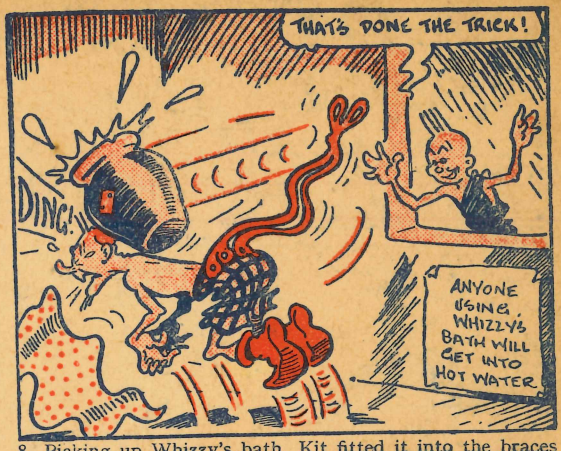
5. And the lightning flash picked the lock clean. In a flash Stonehenge Kit was out of the tree and on the trail of Whizzy and his miserable men. Our hero was happy hiking —he couldn't get muddled with these footsteps in the mud.



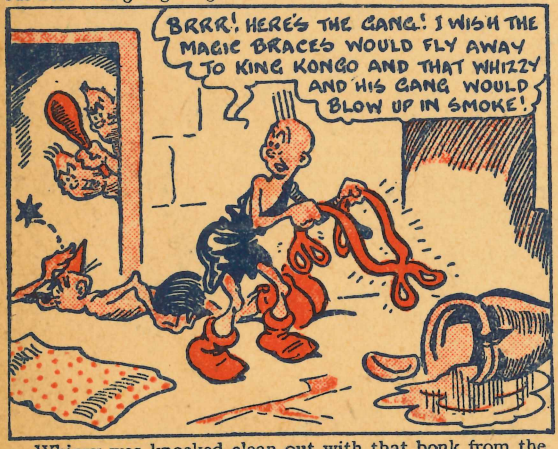
6. To his great delight, Kit saw a light—it was Whizzy's parlour window. The wicked wizard was spring-cleaning his whiskers, and was too much of a snob to do it in the scullery. He was wearing King Kongo's magic braces, too!



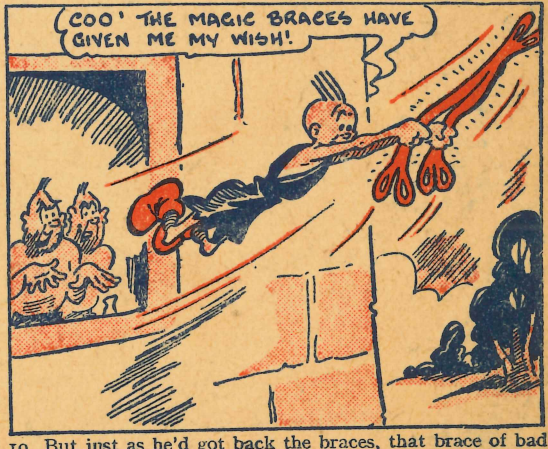
7. Kit chortled. Wicked Whizzy was giving himself a good clean-up, but Kit meant to keep him from getting up to his dirty tricks again. The wizard had had one bath, and our hero was going to give him another—right in the neck!



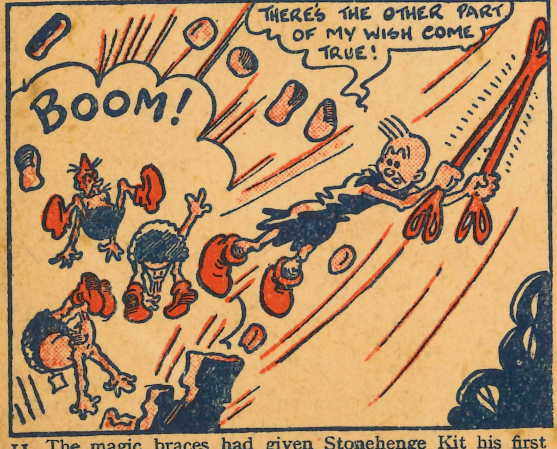
8. Picking up Whizzy's bath, Kit fitted it into the braces like a catapult. It was just a jar filled with water, but "water" jar it gave Whizzy when it copped him. Ding! The wicked old wizard will be in a daze for weeks and weeks!



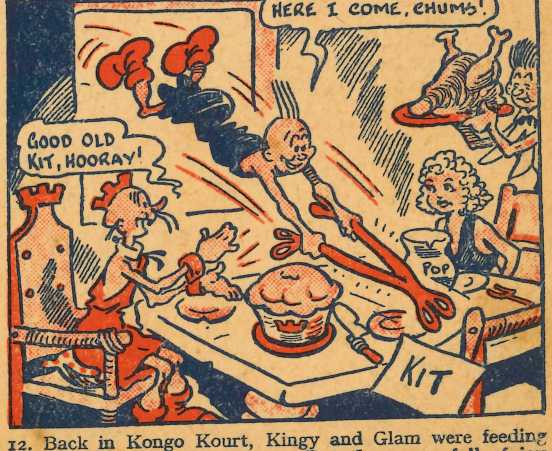
9. Whizzy was knocked clean out with that bonk from the bath. He didn't hear the ding because his ears were full of soap and his head full of stars. But Kit's heart was full of hope as he climbed in and collared King Kongo's braces.



10. But just as he'd got back the braces, that brace of bad lads, the Brit-bashers, appeared. It was an awful to-do until Kit wished—and, whoopee!—away he went sailing up into the air through the open window. *Wheeeee!*



11. The magic braces had given Stonehenge Kit his first wish. They did ditto with the second. Our hero had asked for Whizzy & Co. to be blown up in smoke and—holy smoke! —they were and all! BOOM! Up they shot into the clouds.



12. Back in Kongo Kourt, Kingy and Glam were feeding their faces and feeling fed-up. But they were full of joy when Kit came through the window. He'd brought back King Kongo's magic braces, so a good time was had by all!

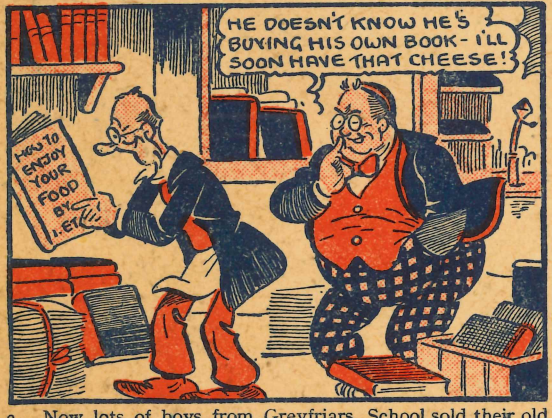
BILLY BUNTER . . THE FATTEST SCHOOLBOY ON EARTH

THIS IS A JOLLY GOOD BIT ABOUT CHEESE- IT SAYS TO GET THE BEST FLAVOUR OUT OF GORGONZOLA CHEESE, YOU SHOULD BURY IT FOR A WEEK BEFORE EATING IT. CRUMBS! IF I HAD ENOUGH MONEY, I'D BUY A GORGONZOLA AND TRY THAT!
SECOND-HAND BOOKS BOUGHT & SOLD
HOW TO ENJOY YOUR FOOD BY I. ETUM
WE GIVE BEST PRICES

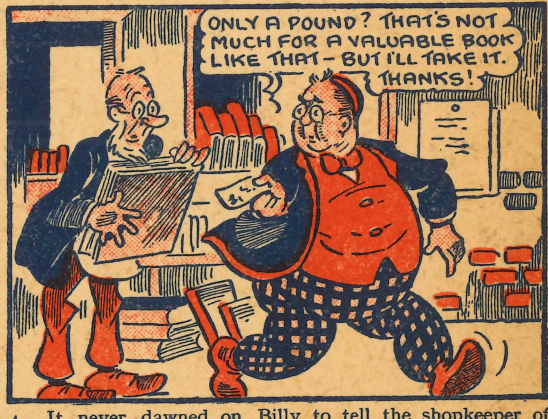
1. Billy Bunter doesn't like reading—it's too much like school for him. But when he spotted a book about eating in the Courtfield bookshop, he grabbed it. You can bet Bunter was interested then.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SELL THAT BOOK TO ME, YOUNG SIR?
HE! HE! WHY THIS IS YOUR—THAT IS—I MEAN HOW MUCH WILL YOU GIVE ME FOR IT?
HOW TO ENJOY YOUR FOOD BY I. ETUM

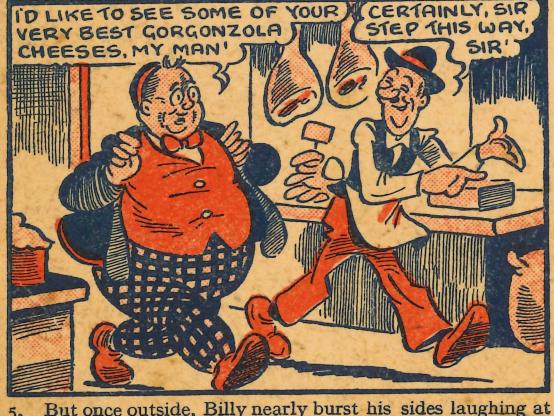
2. There was a nice juicy bit about cheese, and Billy fairly licked his lips as he read all about it. Then he nearly jumped out of his fat skin when the shopkeeper came out and offered to buy the book.



3. Now lots of boys from Greyfriars School sold their old books there, and the man hadn't seen Billy Bunter pick that one up. So when he offered Billy a pound for his own book, Billy said " Yes " at once.



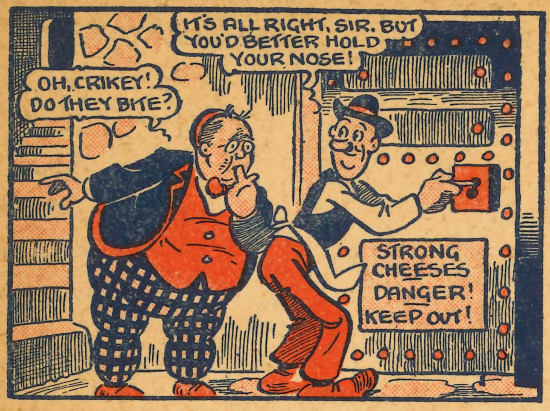
4. It never dawned on Billy to tell the shopkeeper of his mistake. Instead he grabbed the pound note the man offered him and waddled away from the bookshop as fast as his fat legs would take him.



5. But once outside, Billy nearly burst his sides laughing at his luck. It seemed too good to be true, and, remembering what the book had said, he streaked for the best cheese shop that Courtfield sported.

OH CRUMBS! THIS IS A QUEER PLACE! WHERE ARE WE GOING?
NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, SIR. THIS IS THE WAY TO THE CHEESE VAULT. WE KEEP ALL OUR BEST CHEESES LOCKED UP!

6. Here he asked for a real high-powered chunk of gorgonzola. You know, the kind that smells like last year's eggs —and the shopkeeper led him down a winding staircase to a dim dark dungeon.



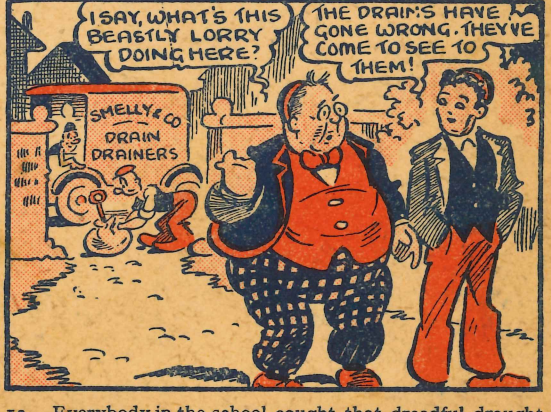
7. Dungeon is right, for the cheeses there were so powerful that they would have gone for a walk if they hadn't been kept under lock and key. There was a huge, bolted door barring the way, too! Even Bunter began to get dithery.

8. But once he was inside and got a whiff of prime gorg. Billy was happy again. Although the Keeper of the Cheeses couldn't take it, Bunter whiffed it and liked it. He sorted out the biggest cheese he could find and strolled out of the dungeon with the cheese under his arm.

9. After taking a whiff of pickles to bring himself round, the cheese merchant wrapped up Billy's cheese for him. Away went the fat lad and nearly gassed the whole village. Behind him, the villagers held their handkerchiefs to their noses. After a bit, they began to feel ill.

10. Leaving a trail of swooning people after him, Bunter at last reached school. He would have started on the cheese there and then, but the book said he had got to bury it for a week. So Billy got busy and buried the cheese just outside the school.

11. But even solid earth couldn't hold off that awful whiff. Clouds of cheese gas kept coming from the ground and nearly knocked Quelchy out. He thought the drains were bad. Holding his nose grimly, he dashed back to school and sent for the plumbers.



12. Everybody in the school caught that dreadful draught of gorg., and only Bunter liked it. He was surprised when the plumbers started to unload their tools just outside the school gates and Billy wanted to know what it was all about.

13. At once a gang of men went on the trail of the gorg. —only they thought it was a bad drain. Billy Bunter watched them from behind a bush. He didn't care what the men did so long as they didn't find his cheese.

MIND THE WAY, YOUNG SIR. I'VE GOT TO DIG UP THAT BIT TO FIND THE WONKY DRAIN!
OH, I SAY. YOU CAN'T DO THAT. THE HEAD'S PLANTED SOME SEEDS JUST HERE - CAN'T YOU SEE I AM WATERING 'EM!

14. Then Billy had a brain-wave. He got a watering can and watered the part of the ground where his precious cheese was buried. He pretended it was the Head's pet part of the garden and told the workmen to clear off.

WE MUSTN'T DIG UP THAT BIT - IT'S SPECIAL!
TEE HEE! THAT WAS A GOOD IDEA OF MINE! I'LL BET THEY WON'T DARE TO DIG HERE NOW! MY CHEESE IS SAFE!

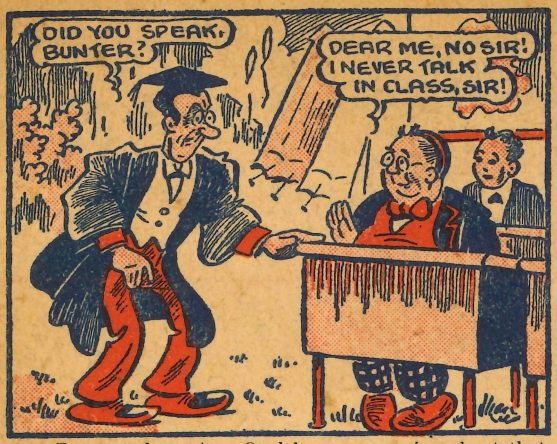
15. His scheme worked. The workmen sheered off and dug up other parts of the school grounds. By this time the smell was enough to stop a train, but Bunter, knowing that his cheese was safe, only chuckled gleefully to himself.

16. It took the men two days to examine all the drains, but they found them all correct. Poor old Quelchy was flabbergasted when the foreman reported this, and he decided to shift all the boys away from the school.

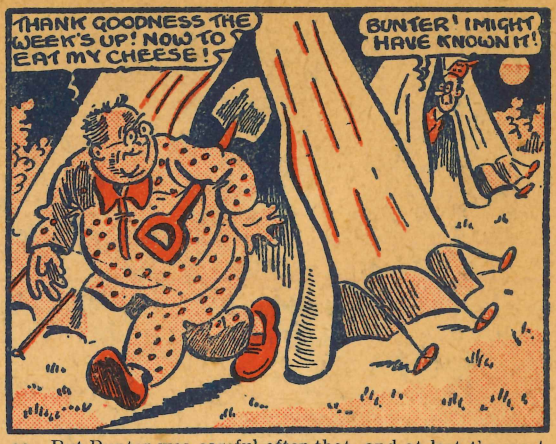
17. But still Bunter didn't say a word about it. It didn't matter to him how much the others were put about so long as his precious cheese was safe. In fact, he thought it a lark when the boys got classes on the sports field.

I WONDER WHAT QUELCHY WOULD SAY IF HE KNEW ABOUT MY CHEESE!
DEAR ME! I DON'T LIKE THIS CAMPING BUSINESS! IT'S MOST AWKWARD HAVING COWS IN THE CLASS!

18. Poor old Quelchy *was* in a state. Even in the open air the smell of that gorg. hung like a cloud over everything. To make matters worse, the cow in the next field got into the habit of calling on him during classes.



19. But one day when Quelchy was moaning about that awful smell, Bunter let something slip about his cheese. When the master tackled him, Bunter denied it, but it was enough to make Quelchy suspicious of him.



20. But Bunter was careful after that, and at last the week was up—the time for the cheese to be dug up! Taking a spade, Billy sneaked out after everybody was asleep to have his feed. But old Quelchy was watching him!

21. The master gasped when he saw Billy go into "the danger zone." The smell of that cheese was so powerful now that Quelchy couldn't go any nearer, so he got a telescope and watched Bunter from a safe distance.

22. Chortling, Bunter quickly dug up his buried cheese, and the smell was enough to knock a house down. But Billy liked it, and, cutting a huge chunk, he tucked into that gorg. like anything.

23. But Quelchy was on his trail! The master put on his gas-mask, but the smell was so strong that he wished he'd got a suit of armour as well. However, he managed to catch Bunter before he'd eaten all his cheese.

24. And that was the end of Billy's dream feast. To get rid of the cheese, Quelchy made Bunter row a boat three miles out to sea, drop the cheese overboard into the drink, and then back again for a licking!

CHEERIO, CHUMS—THIS IS THE END OF THE BOOK, BUT YOU CAN MEET ALL OF US HAPPY FOLK IN "KNOCK-OUT" COMIC EVERY WEDNESDAY!

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CHOCK-FULL OF CHEERY, CHUMMY FUN!

You've enjoyed this fine annual, so we know that you'll like the KNOCK-OUT comic. All the happy folk who've made you laugh and thrilled you in these pages appear every week in this Cheery, Chummy Comic. Be a regular reader of KNOCK-OUT—you're sure to enjoy it!

DEED-A-DAY DANNY
GET THE CIRCUS RINGMASTER A NEW DONKEY!
signed Scoutmaster
GRAND CIRCUS
GOOD DEED
WE'RE FED UP WITH RUNNING ROUND THE RING IN THIS DONKEY COSTUME
Signed: Trailer and Rocky
REAL LIVE DONKEY! DON'T STAND 'EMIND HIM—HE KICKS LIKE A MULE
PAINT
DONKEY ALL READY SIR!
GOOD LAD! SEND 'EM ON NOW!
GO ON NEDDY! PLAY WITH THE CLOWNS!
KEEP OFF'A THESE POLES! THEY HOID THE 'ENT UP!
BOO
CRACK
CIRCUS BAND
MIN. TO MEDAL FROM THE SCOUTMASTER

KNOCK-OUT

FROM ALL NEWSAGENTS 2D EVERY WEDNESDAY

KNOCK-OUT FUN BOOK 1941